

THE JEWESS
LEONORA

FRANC BUSCH

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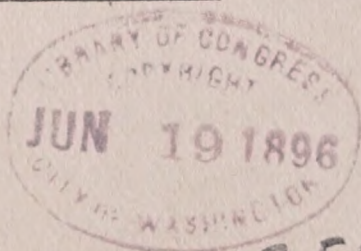
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THE JEWESS, LEONORA.

A NOVEL

BY

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FRANC BUSCH
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THE JEWESS, LEONORA.

I.

One lovely day in June of the year 1843, St. John's Park in the City of New York was looking its very best. Delightfully cool and inviting—quiet, too, was this little retreat, remote from the rush and roar of the busy thoroughfares. This Park was situated within a square formed by Laight and Beach, Varick and Hudson Streets. Its vicinity was, in those days, the home of many wealthy and aristocratic families, who lived there until they were fairly pushed northward by the great tidal wave of the city's prosperity. Central Park, New York's pride of to-day, had not been laid out; but even now, in all those acres for which Nature and Art have done so much, and which is a master-piece of landscape gardening, it is doubtful whether there can

be found trees so fine and large as those which fell beneath the axe when St. John's Park was ruthlessly wiped out of existence. It was not open to the public. Its frequenters were those only who paid the annual rate charged for the enjoyment of the Park privileges, and who were provided by the trustees with keys of admittance.

On this particular day, a woman accompanied by a little girl about twelve years old might be seen walking along the south side of the square. When they came to the entrance she drew a large brass key from her pocket, opened the gate and entered, followed by the little girl. They wended their way along through the shaded walks, seemingly in no haste to find a seat. Finally they chose one under a large tree in the north-east corner. The child carried a doll in her arms. She placed it upon the bench in a sitting position, then seated herself by the side of the old woman.

Children were playing about the fountain; and here and there were groups of

people. There was no one else in this corner. They were as much alone, save for an occasional passer-by, as if they were in their own private grounds. They were a singular pair, and would have attracted attention anywhere. The woman had nearly reached her three score years and ten, and she looked even older. Her hair, what little of it could be seen under a bonnet queer and ancient looking even in those days of coal scuttle-shaped bonnets, was silvery white; and the face was deeply lined. The eyes only retained something of the lustre of youth, being unusually keen and bright. Her features were of a peculiar cast. It would have been difficult to tell to what nationality she belonged, for, although she spoke English fluently, she seemed entirely unlike the women of that country. The firm square chin and the set lines about the mouth gave to the face a somewhat severe expression; but the kindly manner in which she looked at the child by her side, and the gentle tones of her voice when she addressed her now and

then, bespoke an affectionate nature. She was clothed in a dark brown poplin dress, made with a full plain skirt and old-fashioned 'body;' while over the shoulders and folded across her bosom was a kerchief of snowy linen. Her general appearance and her manner indicated her position as nurse; yet there was something out of the ordinary about her, which would give one the impression that she was something more. Could one have heard her conversation with her charge one would easily have seen that she had received a better education than her position implied. She drew some knitting from a silken bag hanging on her arm; and the needles seemed fairly to fly so rapidly did she knit, listening the while to the little girl as she entertained herself carrying on a conversation with her doll in her own pretty childish way. This child was very lovely, quaintly and richly dressed in a frock not unlike those seen on children of the present day, made with a short waist and long skirt, which just grazed the ground when she walked; it

quite concealed the dainty slippered feet as she sat on the bench. She wore a poke-shaped, leghorn bonnet fastened by wide ribbons tied under the chin. Her hair, which was of a rich, brown color, fell in soft, fluffy waves below her waist. Her eyes were dark and lustrous, with lids drooping at the corners and fringed with long, curling lashes. Her features were delicate and high bred; and her complexion, though somewhat pale, was clear and pure.

“Lispeth,” said the child, drawing nearer the old woman, “tell me about the time when you were a little girl like me; about the house where you were born—the fields, the woods, and all the other nice things you know.”

“Fie! Leonora, child! You have heard it so many times. I dare say you could tell it all to me now.”

“O, but I do so like to hear about it, Lispeth, dear; please do,” said the child in coaxing tones, which she knew the old woman could never resist. “I will begin for you, so it will be easy. In a beautiful

little valley by the side of a clear stream there stood a low stone house with a roof of red tiles—now go on, please, Lispeth, tell all about the lambs playing in the meadows; and do not forget the cunning little chickens, and the proud pea fowl with his beautiful spreading tail.”

With a smile which lighted up the grim old face the kind hearted woman took up the tale so often told, but which never seemed to grow old to her young listener, whose greatest delight was to hear everything pertaining to a life of which she knew nothing, having lived since she could remember within the narrow confines of four brick walls, with never a glimpse of anything like the country save what she saw in this small Park.

They remained sitting there a long time; the child listening with eyes alight in the interest of the story, ready to refresh Lispeth’s memory, if she should forget a single part; and giving vent, now and then, to an expression of glad surprise should the old woman chance to think of something new to tell, as she

lived over again the years of her childhood passed in that dear old home beyond the seas.

They were undisturbed in their corner. So absorbed were they in their own pleasure that they did not seem to notice the few who passed that way. Two ladies came along the path dressed in the fashion of the day—in large bonnets and gowns whose skirts were ruffled to the waist, and set out by hoops so wide that it required the whole width of the walk for them to pass. The lady on the side towards the occupants of the bench came so near that her skirt brushed against them, and her attention was called to the child first, by one of her bursts of enthusiasm, then, by her remarkable beauty.

“Did you ever see such a lovely child?” she asked quickly of her companion.

“She is certainly a beautiful little thing,” was the reply. “She is a Jewess.”

“Are you quite sure? She does not look like a Jewess. Neither does the old woman with her.”

“O, yes, I am quite sure. Her name

is Leonora Arnstein. She lives next door to us; and I see her very often. She leads a strange life for a child. Her father is very strict with her, and will not allow her to have any associates even among her own faith. She never visits other children, and is not permitted to invite them to her home. Her only companion is that queer looking old woman."

"Let us pass that way again," said the first speaker. "The old woman seems to be very kind to the child," she remarked, when they were again beyond ear-shot.

"Yes, she is perfectly devoted to her. I have sometimes seen her in their back yard playing like a child with her little charge. She seems to have care of the house also. I have often tried to make her acquaintance when we have met at market, for the little girl interests me; but the woman repels all my advances."

The ladies passed on. Leonora sat quietly for a few moments; then she said in wistful tones:—

"O, Lispeth, I wish we might live in the country. Why does not father take

us sometimes? I would like to play in the fields and woods. How nice it would be to have some cows, and some dear little chickens; and O, perhaps a pony to ride! Do you think I will go to the country some day, Lispeth?"

"Yes, child, of course you shall. Old Lispeth will find a way to take you."

Just then some little girls came along. One of them spoke to Leonora and asked her to join their play.

"Yes, go, dearie," said the old woman. "I will call you when it is time to go home." The little girl ran off while Lispeth muttered something about the poor child having few pleasures so dear to childish hearts.

II.

The afternoon wore away. It was five o'clock. Lispeth was nodding over her knitting when she was suddenly brought to herself by hearing a voice, which she knew only too well, speaking her name. It was three months since she had heard that voice and it caused her to turn quickly in the direction of the sound. Just outside the Park, as near as possible to the bench where she was sitting, stood a man, who said in peremptory tones:—

“Bring me the key, Lispeth. I wish to enter.”

“Yes, master.”

The old woman arose and handed him the key through the palings. By the time he had admitted himself and joined her, Lispeth was quite composed and knitting busily.

“You were not expecting to see me to-day, I suppose. Where is the child?”

“Playing with some school-mates by the fountain. I did not know when to expect you,” said Lispeth, keeping her eyes fixed on her work, seemingly indifferent to everything save the heel she was just turning.

There was silence for a few minutes. The man looked carefully about him to see if there was anyone near enough to hear their conversation. People were beginning to leave the Park, and they were entirely remote from the few who remained. It would not have been easy for persons generally to judge of this man's age. He was one of those, who, by assiduous care in dress, try to appear younger than they are. He succeeded to a certain extent; but there are many ways by which Nature betrays the imprints of time, and a close observer would set him down for sixty. His was not a pleasing countenance. The features were too sharp and there was an expression in the dark eyes, gleaming from beneath heavy, overhanging brows, which would make one instinctively shrink from opposing his

will. One glance from those eyes when opposition roused the hidden fire within would have the effect of subduing a strong nature even; while one naturally timid would cower and yield through fear, or seek to escape his power. His hair and mustache were carefully dyed. He was almost foppish in his attire; yet there was a nicety in all the appointments of his dress which displayed good taste. His general appearance was that of a gentleman and a man of wealth.

"I have returned without the casket," he said in a low tone.

"Yes?" returned Lispeth indifferently, while the needles flew; but the sudden light in the keen eyes might have expressed joy or triumph; certainly anything but indifference. It passed unnoticed by the man and Lispeth added quickly,—“You worked in the wrong direction, perhaps.”

“By no means. We found the place where it was hidden, but it was known to someone before us. It had been taken away.”

"How is it ever to be found then?" asked Lispeth.

"It *shall* be found," said the man in quick, decisive tones. "My journey has not been entirely fruitless. We have a clue to the person who forestalled us; and that clue shall be followed up until the casket is in my possession."

Had the man turned and looked at the woman by his side, he would have noticed the sudden tightening of the thin lips. The needles seemed to fly faster than before. She spoke, but the words came slowly as if she feared to betray her emotion.

"What reason have you to think that you have really found its former hiding place?"

"A sure proof in the fact that we found the iron chest in which it had been placed, and in that chest a tiny key; also a drawing of the casket with a minute description of the mechanism of the lock. The person who took the casket left those things in her haste."

Lispeth noticed that the man said *her*

haste, and for the first time the needles paused in their mad combat. Her lips moved, but no sound came from them. She dared not speak, but stooped to pick up Leonora's doll, which had fallen to the ground by a sudden movement on the part of the man, as he shifted his position on the bench. Most fortunate was the occurrence, for he turned his eyes full upon her suddenly, but saw no signs of her former agitation. "Yes," he continued, "she left them; also a clue by which she can be traced. Then, when the casket with its precious contents is mine—well, never mind what then."

"But the casket belongs to the child," ventured Lispeth as she gave her master a quick side-long glance.

"Yes, but the child belongs to me, and she shall marry among her own people. She is being reared in the faith of her forefathers, and her husband shall be of my choosing. He is chosen—my only brother's orphan son who bears my name. He will be the head of a family whose wealth and power in this country shall be

unrivalled. The name of Arnstein shall be handed down to posterity and shall be known throughout the whole world. It will not be many years now before a beginning can be made; and I shall live to see it."

The vehemence of the words, and the gleam in the fierce dark eyes bespoke the intense eagerness with which he looked forward to the realization of the great ambition of his life.

Lispeth, whose face had grown white even to the lips as she listened, was trying to put away her knitting, while the old hands trembled, and a look of intense fear overspread the features. She was striving to hide her agitation lest her master should note the effect of his words upon her. He sat musing a while, then spoke again, more to himself:—

"Yes, a woman has found out the secret and taken away the casket. Of that I am quite sure. A man would have done it more thoroughly and left no trace. We have only to find the mate to the

silken mitt which lay beside the iron chest to" ——

He was interrupted by a sudden cry from Lispeth, who was unable to control herself at the mention of the silken mitt; then, frightened at having betrayed herself, she sprang to her feet. Ere her master could speak, as he turned suddenly and looked at her, she said:—

“Oh! I thought I saw Leonora fall, but it was that other little girl.” She sank upon the bench again with a deep sigh, seemingly relieved that Leonora was unhurt, but really at having misled her master as to the true cause of her fright. By a desperate effort she regained her composure and the pallor faded from her face at the man’s next words,—

“You make a fool of yourself over that child, Lispeth; but call her. It is time to go home. I see you do not obey my instructions—that she is to form no associates about here. I have told you that many times; yet I come home and find her playing freely with those children.”

“This is the child’s birthday and I allow it as a treat. They are some little girls who attend Madame Le Roc’s school. It shall not occur again,” said Lispeth, so relieved that this reproof of her master fell lightly upon her. Walking along the path she called Leonora, who came quickly at her bidding. Her face was flushed with exercise and her eyes sparkled with the enjoyment of her play with companions of her own age. Rare indeed was a chance like this. She did not notice the man sitting on the bench until he came forward and greeted her. She stopped suddenly in her animated description of the games they had played and looked at him in surprise. She gave him her hand timidly, saying:—

“You have come back. I am glad to see you safe, father.”

The joy quickly faded from her face, and, taking Lispeth’s hand, she walked demurely by her side as they all wended their way home.

They entered a house on a street in the immediate neighborhood of St. John’s

Square; a house built before the time of long monotonous rows of brown stone fronts, which, during the past fifteen years, have given place in their turn to a more varied and far more pleasing style of architecture, thanks to the advent of a number of architects who are true artists. This three-story and attic house, built of red brick, if preserved to-day, would hold its own as a work of architectural beauty with any built during the following forty years, which brought so many and such rapid changes in a city now spoken of as the possible future metropolis of the world.

The entrance door of this old New York house was beautiful. Over the door itself was an arch, elliptical in shape, under which was an arched fan-light. The lintels were delicately decorated; and the handsome railings and high open posts or newals, which flanked the foot of the flight of stone steps leading to the door, were of iron all wrought out by hand.

This house had been built by a rich

merchantman about twenty years before our story opens. He had spared no expense in the interior decorations; and it would have been difficult to find in that day a more beautifully carved mantel than could be seen in its spacious drawing-room. To-day we see them patterned after those elegant and artistic mantel pieces, with their slender pillars and carved fronts, over which the simply moulded shelf projects; and as a result they give to a room something of the elegance and homelikeness of those old days before the appearance of the cold, stiff-looking marble mantels, which came in with the equally cold and sombre brown-stone fronts—called homes (?).

In the year 1833, after the loss at sea of two of this merchantman's ships, his name disappeared from the door of this noble looking home in old New York, and a new silver plate shown in its place, bearing the name of Enos Arnstein. He was a Hebrew, who came to this country about that time, and established himself as a jeweler and diamond merchant.

III.

Lispeth was sitting in a curtained alcove adjoining a large handsome room over the drawing-room. There were two single beds in this alcove and in one of them Leonora lay asleep. The woman waited until she could hear the soft regular breathing of her little charge in sound slumber. Then she arose, drew the curtains together, and, taking up a lighted candle from the table, she entered a large clothes-press at the farther end of the room. She seated herself on the floor beside an old leather trunk, and, slipping a small key from a slender chain worn around her neck, she quickly unlocked it and raised the lid. She placed the candle on the floor, and began taking out various articles until she held in her hand a box containing odds and ends. She tumbled things over in nervous haste and finally brought to light a delicate silken mitt. This she quickly thrust into her

bosom and continued to empty the trunk of its contents. There lay strewn about her articles of attire, which would have puzzled one to decide as to what period in the age of woman they belonged. Raising herself to a kneeling position Lispeth lifted out what seemed to be the bottom of the trunk, but it was only a thin board covered with the lining, which fitted closely over the bottom. Two letters lying side by side were disclosed to view. She took them out and held them in her hand some time, while a smile overspread her features, and a warm light glowed in her fine dark eyes. One of the letters bore a foreign postmark; the seal had been broken and it was addressed to

“Karl Sturmer.”

The other letter bore no postmark whatever, and the seal still remained unbroken. The direction read—

“To my daughter,
Leonora Sturmer.”

Lispeth slipped the letters into her pocket, and then began replacing the contents of the trunk. This finished and

the trunk locked once more, she withdrew to the outer room. She seated herself by a table, on which lay a capacious work-basket. From its depths she produced a piece of oil silk, and was soon occupied in making a case of double thickness large enough to hold the letters. She drew them from her pocket, slipped them into the case, and was about to sew up the end when a thought seemed to strike her. She took them out again. Her hand sought the bosom of her dress and she drew from its hiding place the silken mitt. She laid it between the two letters; then, after tying a cord securely around them, she slipped the little parcel into the oil silk case and carefully sewed up the end. Her task completed she extinguished the light and seated herself beside the window.

It was growing late. The streets became quiet. The foot-steps of passers-by were few and far between. Still Lisbeth sat there in the moonlight of this lovely night in June. A clock in the neighborhood struck eleven, when the sound of

a familiar footstep reached her ear. The street door closed and she heard the same foot-steps on the stairs. Then a door on the second floor closed, and Lispeth knew that her master was in his room and would soon retire. Still another hour she waited; then, taking off her shoes, she stole softly from the room with the unlighted candle in her hand and the parcel so precious to her in her pocket. She paused before her master's door and listened, then placed her eye to the key-hole. Satisfied by the silence and darkness within that he slept, she crept stealthily along till she reached the staircase. Guiding herself by the ballustrade she descended one flight, then another, and disappeared in the darkness below.

The next morning after Leonora had been conducted to school, and Lispeth had returned from market, she was summoned to her master's presence. He was sitting in a handsome paneled room on the first floor; a room devoted exclusively to his own use, and seldom entered by any one save himself. A square table stood

in the center of the room. Its surface was nearly covered by a large map over which Mr. Arnstein had been poring for several hours. At his elbow lay a paper containing rows of figures.

There was perfect repose in Lispeth's manner this morning, and she met the piercing eye of her master unflinchingly, as he told her that he wished to talk with her on an important subject, and that he had some questions to ask her. She seated herself at his bidding and waited for him to begin.

"You have been in my employ just nine years," said Mr. Arnstein, as he pushed back his chair and faced this woman who served him, and yet towards whom he entertained a feeling he could not have described. Had any one told him that there was one person in this world whom he feared he would have scoffed at the idea; nevertheless in his own secret heart he knew that here was a woman who was always subservient to his wishes and devoted to his interests, yet who held him somewhat in her power. Perhaps

it was because he knew she understood him thoroughly, while he had never been able to fathom this strange woman's nature. Once only had he tried to rid himself of her, thinking to place Leonora in charge of a younger person. He learned then what force lay hidden behind this woman's taciturnity, and, thoroughly baffled in the attempt, he never made another. This morning his mind was occupied with the one great scheme of his life, and Lispeth was to him only as a factor towards its success. He did not carefully weigh his words when he asked:—

“How long did you serve that Christian dog?”

“Who, sir!” exclaimed Lispeth angrily, while her eyes flashed fire.

Her master hastened to propitiate her, for he feared lest she might relapse into one of her sullen moods, with which he was familiar; then he knew he could get nothing from her.

“There—there, never mind the expression. You know the very mention of

that man's name is hateful to me. I will put the question differently. How long were you in the employ of Leonora's parents?"

"Seven years less three months," replied Lispeth calmly, for she had a secret to guard, and she realized that it would require all her self control to answer her master's questions in such a way that he would remain in ignorance of it.

"Leonora was one year old when her mother died," resumed Mr. Arnstein. She was three when I claimed her after her father's death. He survived his wife about a year, so the child must have been in your care for nearly a year after that. How long had you been in this country when you entered their employ?"

"Only a short time until I found—Lispeth hesitated a moment—'employment,' she finished. They were my first and only employers in America."

"And before that?" asked her master.

"What matters it? I served them faithfully, and I promised to watch over and care for their little one so long as my

life should last. And I will do it. You know whether or not I have kept that promise during these nine years."

"Yes, yes, I know you have. But whenever I touch upon your past life you will say nothing, save that you are of Jewish parentage. I suppose it does not matter. You possess a good education, and I have sometimes thought you might not have been in service prior to your coming to America."

"You are mistaken. I had been in service many years."

"Yet the exact nature of that service you will not disclose. Your past seems to be a closed book. Well, so let it remain if you choose. I care not. My particular reason for questioning you to-day is because I think you can be of assistance to me in finding the silken mitt; in other words, in tracing the woman who obtained possession of the casket and—where are you going?" asked her master quickly as Lispeth arose.

"I wish to change my seat. The light

from that window is too strong for my eyes."

Lispeth seated herself so that her face would be in shadow. Mr. Arnstein continued:

"I wish you to let your memory travel backward, and see if you can tell me anything concerning a woman whose history I will relate, at least as much of it as I have been able to learn. From your own statement it is plain that you entered my daughter's employ about eight months after her marriage and flight to this country. Tell me who were the members of their household during the following years."

"Only Herr Sturmer, his wife, and myself during the first five years. Then Leonora was born, and a maid-of-all-work was added to that household."

"There was no other person living with them?"

"No, sir."

"Strange indeed," said Mr. Arnstein partly to himself. After a pause he re-

sumed, "Can you tell me, Lispeth, whether my daughter and her husband ever spoke of the homes they left in the old country? Did they talk over their affairs in your presence? You seemed to have been much to them. No doubt they trusted you implicitly."

Lispeth's eyes flashed once more. She hesitated ere she spoke.

"They had no reason to distrust me, sir. Yes, they talked freely of their affairs. They had done nothing to be ashamed of, and they never felt a pang of regret; for they were perfectly happy in their love. Your daughter seldom spoke of her old home." Lispeth answered that question fearlessly; for she knew, although her master turned somewhat uneasily in his chair, and a dark frown gathered upon his brow, that he would keep his temper, when so much depended upon it. "But," she continued, "Herr Sturmer always spoke most lovingly of the 'Dear Fatherland' as he was fond of calling it, and of his old home there. He liked to

tell stories of his boyhood days, and all the inmates of his father's household were known to us, even the humblest servant in his employ."

IV.

This last information seemed to give Mr. Arnstein much satisfaction. He sat lost in thought for some time; finally he said:—

“Now listen attentively to what I have to relate, then, when I have finished, I wish you to tell me all you know concerning a certain member of the Sturmer household. My daughter married without my knowledge a young student of the University of Berlin. She did not even ask my consent, for she knew that it would never be obtained. No, never! Had a son of the royal family, attracted by my daughter’s marvellous beauty, sought her hand in marriage, it would have been refused him! No good can ever come from the union of a Christian and a Jew!” Mr. Arnstein brought his fist down with violence on the table before him, and his eyes gleamed fiercely as he continued.

“The fact that she, reared as she had been, should have left her father’s roof, and renounced the sublime faith of her ancestors, to become the wife of a Christian, made it perfectly justifiable in me to cast her off; and in Herr Sturmer to disown a son, who would have brought into his own proud family a daughter of a race, against which his prejudice was too strong ever to be overcome. I took no pains at that time to learn anything concerning the family of my daughter’s husband. I heard only that she had married Karl Sturmer, the son of Herr Felix Sturmer by his second wife. I desired to forget that I had a daughter. And so the years slipped by. The news reached me of Felix Sturmer’s death and of his strange freak of selling certain valuable estates, placing the proceeds in gold with Karl’s mother’s jewels into a casket, which also belonged to his second wife, and hiding it so that all search for it proved fruitless. He must have softened towards his youngest son, and forgiven him after a while, for, although he could

never bring himself to recognize his Jewish wife, or acknowledge as his grandchildren any issue of that marriage, he wished to give him the means of living, somewhat in accordance with the manner in which he had been reared. He was never heard to mention his son Karl's name, and, while it was known that he had sold those estates, what disposition he made of the proceeds was never suspected until the settlement of his affairs after his death. He was a very systematic man always, and each portion of his large wealth was accounted for, save the money from those estates; but the clause—"I leave to my son Karl his mother's jewel casket and all it contains; he knows where to find it"—settled it in the minds of the other two heirs, a son and a daughter by Herr Sturmer's first wife, as to the portion which had been set aside for their young step-brother by the eccentric old man. It was believed that Felix Sturmer wrote to his son of this provision made for him, and told him where to find the casket. That Karl

would hasten to claim his inheritance on being apprised of his father's death was never for a moment doubted; but months went by and he did not come. Then there were many surmises concerning the casket. Some believed that Karl had come in disguise and carried away his inheritance; others would have it that Felix Sturmer had hidden it in some place where his son could find it without going near his old home,—all believed that the casket was in Karl's possession, and search for it was abandoned. After some time inquiries were instituted, and it was ascertained that he was dead—that his death occurred three months *prior to his father's*. I then made up my mind to come to New York in search of my daughter. I wished to know the truth concerning the casket, and whether there were any children to inherit their father's share of the Sturmer wealth. I found that my daughter, too, was dead. You know the rest—how I, as the rightful guardian, claimed her child, and how I have sought to find the treasure which is

to make her rich. It was then that I formed the plan of giving her the name of Arnstein through marriage with my nephew and only living relative. Also by combining her wealth with mine, which is considerable, make the name of Arnstein a power in the next generation. She is called by my name now because hers is hateful to me; but she shall bear it legally in a few years."

Mr. Arnstein paused and seemed lost in thought for several minutes. Lispeth remained silent waiting for him to resume his narrative. Finally he roused himself and said,—

"But to continue. When it became known that Karl was dead, and that all the surmises concerning the casket were wrong, the search for it was renewed; but to no purpose. Years went by and I learned, about a twelve month since, that the eldest son of Felix Sturmer had died leaving no children to inherit the beautiful home, which had descended from father to son through many generations; and that he had made his

sister's only child his heir. My information came through a friend, who has been untiring in his vigilance for me, through these nine years, of all that has transpired in the Sturmer family. He wrote that the way was clear for him to begin his search for a clue to the hiding place of the casket, as the house would be unoccupied for several years save by a man and his wife placed in charge. He felt sure that some clue must exist; and, if he could only gain admission to the house, he might be able to find what others had overlooked—some scrap of paper or something to put him on the right track. It is not necessary to state how he succeeded in gaining admission to the house, save that the most powerful of all agencies—gold, eventually paved the way. He did find a clue which required my assistance in following up. I went to Germany three months ago. You know the result—the hiding place was found, but the long sought treasure was gone. Then we bent our energies to find out who had learned the secret before us; a

task by no means easy, although the finding of the silken mitt led us to believe that it was a woman—a woman, too, who must have been a member of the Sturmer household. I then began to learn all I could of the family—not a difficult matter in the case of a family so well known. In order to find out some of the inner workings of that household during the past eighteen years, I sought a former servant, who, although she was only a young maid at the time of Karl's marriage, possessed an excellent memory, and a tongue easily set loose at the sight of a gold piece, which would buy so many comforts for her large family. Before I started for home I had learned enough to satisfy me as to the woman; but how to find her is another thing."

Lispeth had spoken not a word throughout her master's narrative. She sat motionless in a high-backed armchair; her hands lying idly in her lap. Her lips were firmly pressed together and she seemed to be listening intently. She was

prepared to answer her master's question which she felt must come.

"Did you ever hear Leonora's father speak of the woman who served his mother in the capacity of a maid, but who was really more like a companion to her?"

"Marie Rabowski?" asked Lispeth.

"The same," replied her master.

"Yes, Herr Sturmer spoke of her very often. He loved her for she was like a mother to him during the years following his mother's death, which occurred when he was eight years old."

"I learned," continued Mr. Arnstein, "that Marie Rabowski left the home which had sheltered her so many years directly after Karl's marriage, for her position there was not an enviable one. When Felix Sturmer brought home his English wife, she was accompanied by this woman, who was ever disliked by the servants. They could never bring themselves to look upon a paid dependent as any better than themselves. They did not like her because she was not one

of them. Her meals were always served in the housekeeper's room; and her life was passed entirely apart from them. She was devoted to Karl's mother; and there seemed to be some strong bond between them. It seems she had promised to care for her boy and remain with him so long as he should need her. She was true to her promise. It was that only which kept her in an uncongenial atmosphere. She was never treated very well by the other members of the family after the death of her mistress. Felix Sturmer's second wife was disliked by her step-children simply because she was their stepmother and a foreigner. Although Marie Rabowski was still a young woman when she first went to Germany, she was described to me as having hair already quite gray, a sad face, and a reserved manner. Her name told plainly that she was of Polish descent; but she spoke English fluently and always called England home. Her mistress had bequeathed to her a small legacy; and with what she had saved, it was said, she could

live comfortably all her days. It was believed that she returned to England. She was never heard from again, although there was a rumor afloat that about the time of Felix Sturmer's death she was seen in a small village near by. But on making inquiries I could not find a person who had seen her. Do you know whether her whereabouts were known to Leonora's father? Did he ever say where she had taken up her abode?"

"Yes, he received a letter from her during the early days of his marriage, begging him to go to England and share the small cottage she had purchased, assuring him that he could earn a living there as well as in America. She knew that he was in this country with small means, and must depend upon his own exertions for support. But he wrote her he had come here to chance his fortune with the rest, and nothing would induce him to leave this land of freedom."

"Then they must have kept each other informed of their movements," said Mr.

Arnstein. "Do you know in what part of England she made her home?"

"Some place near London, I believe."

"You do not know the name, then?"

"Herr Sturmer knew and he was the only one who did know save Marie Rabowski herself," said Lispeth evasively.

"Then in England we must search for her. It is strange she did not come to this country, especially if she obtained possession of the casket; and I have every reason to believe that she was the one who carried it away. Nothing was known concerning her early life and nothing has been known of her since she left Germany. If she were so deeply attached to Frau Sturmer and her son, one would suppose she would try to find out whether there were any children from that marriage, and return the casket to its rightful owner. At any rate, if she still lives, she must be found. I wish to ask you one more question. The fact that Felix Sturmer himself asserted that his son knew where to find the casket

shows that he must have taken some way of informing him where it was hidden. But when and how that was done has always been a question. Probably through a letter. The estates were sold about two years before his death; but whether he wrote to his son at once, or whether he delayed doing so until his failing health warned him that his time on earth was short, is not known. If he delayed it, then Karl died in ignorance of his large inheritance, for his death occurred two months prior to his father's. Do you know whether he received a letter from his father before he died?"

"I am quite sure he did not. He never gave up the hope that he might hear from him; but from the day of his marriage until the day of his death he received not a line from him or any member of that cold-hearted race!"

Lispeth spoke vehemently, and so far forgot herself as to bring her clinched fist down with force upon the arm of the chair. Her master looked at her in surprise. She soon recovered herself, and

as if to make some excuse for displaying such strong feeling, hastened to say,—

“Herr Sturmer always spoke most affectionately of his family, and I never heard him utter one unkind word about those who neglected him so heartlessly.”

“Then he died in ignorance of his father’s provision for him? He knew nothing of the casket?” asked Mr. Arnstein.

“Yes, he died believing himself still unforgiven—still a disowned son.”

A long silence followed Lispeth’s last words. Finally her master said:

“You may go, Lispeth. This is all for the present. No, wait yet a moment,” he added, as Lispeth arose. “I wish to tell you that Leonora need not attend school after this week. She will have no more lessons save from her music-master until autumn; then she will receive instructions from a daily visiting teacher.”

“Poor child,” muttered Lispeth, as she ascended the stairs on leaving her master’s presence. “She will be cut off entirely from youthful associates through his selfishness. Never mind, there will

be one of his commands which she shall not obey unless her heart is in it. He shall never force my darling into a loveless marriage. I know how to prevent it."

V.

Nearly six years have passed away, and we find ourselves again in the same Park in old New York with its fine large trees freshly clothed in robes of tender green. The same bench in the northeast corner, having for its occupants the same Lispeth of old and her charge. So little changed is Lispeth that one can hardly realize how long a time it is since she sat nodding over her knitting just as she is doing now. It might be the very identical sock, too, for all the difference one can see. Her costume also is unchanged in appearance. The plain brown frock and kerchief of snowy linen folded across her bosom have a look of freshness. The queer shaped bonnet which adorns her head alone shows signs of wear. Although she has reached her seventy-fourth year she looks no older than she did six years ago. She aged young and has looked just the same for years.

With Leonora, however, all is different. Those years have seen her transition from childhood into womanhood with the early promise of great beauty fulfilled. She is lovely both in face and form, lacking only the color and robustness which healthful exercise and an outdoor life can give. She is too slender and her pure complexion too pale; yet the sweet young face with the lustrous brown eyes, which have a way of looking at one sometimes with a pleading expression, attracts and interests those who see her. Once when walking with her governess, Mademoiselle Rouget, she noticed how people looked at her. "O, Mademoiselle," she said, "I wish people would not stare at me so. What makes them do it?" "It is your doleful face. You look as if you were going to a funeral," replied the French woman flippantly. And Leonora, perfectly unconscious of her beauty, believed it. Her sensitive nature caused her to shrink from the gaze of people, and to dread going about more and more. Her life during the past three years has

been spent in the daily association of a woman for whom she had not one grain of affection, and whose nature was entirely antagonistic to her own. She submissively obeyed Mademoiselle Rouget's instructions, and followed out the course of study which her father marked out for her, with passive indifference. Between Mr. Arnstein and the young girl growing up under his protection there was not the slightest sympathy. She feared him and obeyed him through fear. The idea of doing anything to please him and looking to him for praise in consequence of a task well done never entered her mind. He selected her governess, her music-master, and her dancing-master with great care, then exacted the strictest obedience to them. Her religious training Mr. Arnstein himself undertook. He was an orthodox Jew and required of Leonora regular attendance at divine worship. She was brought up to observe the great feasts and fasts of the Jewish year. The dietary laws were strictly enforced in that household; and

the flesh of animals that divide not the hoof nor chew the cud never found its way there. She has lived in the midst of a busy world, yet, by the stern decree of him, whom she has been taught to call father, she has been entirely cut off from all intercourse with it. Her manners are more womanly and her intellect more mature than most young maidens of her age; due, no doubt to her lack of youthful companions and pleasures.

"It is pleasant to be here once again, Lispeth, dear," said Leonora. "I am so glad Mademoiselle Rouget has gone. Do you think father will soon supply her place?"

At the sound of Leonora's voice, Lispeth's bobbing head became stationary, and the needles resumed their constant click-click.

"I do not know, my child, what will come next. Perhaps a suitable person cannot be found just now, and you may have the coming summer free from study. You need the rest; in fact, you must have it." Lispeth spoke decisively. "Ah!"

she continued with a sigh, "if old Lispeth could have her way you would be as free as a bird."

"Little Fraulein Van Wormer was a good soul, so kind and gentle always; but Mademoiselle Rouget—Ugh! well, I am glad she has returned to her 'dear Paris.' Father considered her French perfect and her manner faultless. I suppose it was so."

"Yes, dear, and your education is your father's first thought."

"I presume it is very important, and I love my music. But why have I been required to spend two or three hours each week for years with a dancing-master, learning different positions, making courtesies, and taking steps until I became so tired that at times I fairly detested the whole thing? I cannot see the use of it."

"It is to give you grace, Leonora. I suppose your father thinks it will be of use to you some day."

The young girl was silent a few moments. Then she spoke again.

"I wish you would tell me about my mother, Lispeth. You have said she was very beautiful."

"Yes, and as good as she was beautiful. She was always bright and happy, too."

"I do not think I am very happy, Lispeth. I want—well, I do not know what I want. A different kind of a life, perhaps. I am so lonely at times. Did father love my mother, and were they happy together?"

"O, yes, they loved each other dearly and were happy—so very happy together," replied Lispeth warmly, ere she recollected that she was not speaking of the father Leonora knew and believed to be her own.

"I cannot imagine father ever being very affectionate. He is always so harsh with me. I can never remember his giving me a caress. No doubt he is changed, but what could have brought it about, Lispeth?"

Lispeth realized as Leonora was speaking that she had passed the age when everything is accepted on trust, in the

carelessness of childhood. It came to her that now Leonora would think and reason for herself, and could no longer be put off with evasive answers. She had been occupied heretofore with her studies, and had spent most of her time with her governess, whose custom it was to come every morning at nine and remain until five o'clock in the afternoon. They practiced, read and walked together; in fact, the hours passed with Lispeth during the six preceding years were comparatively few by reason also of the good woman's many cares. But she had been content, knowing that her darling was improving day by day, growing in grace and beauty, with every educational advantage. It was only of late that Lispeth had become anxious about her. She had seen with a heavy heart how pale and languid Leonora had been growing day by day, and her mind had been occupied in trying to devise a way for her to have a rest and change. When she learned that Mademoiselle Rouget intended to marry and return to her native land she rejoiced in-

wardly, hoping that as summer was so near at hand Mr. Arnstein might decide not to engage a new governess. Now, when Leonora asked this question, Lispeth could not tell a direct falsehood; neither could she tell her of the loving father, who, on his death-bed, had begged her to care for his little one so long as she might live, also to teach her to love the memory of her parents. Lispeth had given her promise and had kept the first part of it faithfully; but she knew that circumstances, which no one could have foreseen, had arisen to force her to keep silence, and allow Leonora to grow up as Mr. Arnstein desired—bearing his name and calling him father.

“What makes you silent so long, Lispeth? You have not answered my question,” said Leonora.

“I know child. I cannot answer it now. Have faith in old Lispeth, and some day she will tell you many things which she has been obliged to keep from you, and which she must keep yet a little while longer.”

Leonora turned and looked in surprise at the old woman, whose voice trembled with emotion as she battled with her inclination to tell her darling the story of her parents—of their love and short-lived happiness.

“I do trust you, Lispeth, dear. You are always so good to me. But you will tell me some day. You know I am no longer a child. I will soon be eighteen.”

“I can make no promise little one,” said Lispeth in low gentle tones, “but perhaps I will tell you the story of your mother’s life on the day you are eighteen.” There can be no better time, thought she, and no better way than to learn all from my own lips.

“This is the eighth day of May and my birthday comes the fifteenth of June, a little more than a month away. I shall remind you, Lispeth, of what you have just said.”

There was silence for some time. It was early in the afternoon and there were few in the Park. No sound broke the stillness in their retired corner save

the twitter of birds in the branches over their heads, and the click-click of Lispeth's needles as she sat busily knitting.

"Lispeth," said Leonora after a while, "it seems to me you are knitting—knitting always. My earliest recollection of you is associated with those same gray socks. But are you never going to let these dear hands rest," continued she, placing her shapely white hands over the old and withered ones of her beloved foster-mother. "You must have already knit thousands of socks; and what becomes of them is a mystery to me."

"To be sure," returned the old woman, "I have knit a great many pairs since your childhood to say nothing of the years before; but what becomes of them need not remain a mystery. I knit them to sell, and many dollars have I earned thereby."

"O, then judging from the socks," laughed Leonora, "you must be very rich."

"Ah! child, old Lispeth is not poor, but she will have use for all she can earn."

Troops of children began to gather in the Park, having just been released from school. Leonora sat watching their games for some time. After a while, she said:

“Lispeth, I would like to go home now.”

“Why, dearie, it is still early, and I thought you would enjoy this whole afternoon in the open air.”

“I would, but I fear that I am going to be ill. I feel quite faint.”

Lispeth looked quickly at her, and became alarmed as she saw the sudden pallor of the young girl's face. She hastily put up her knitting, and going to the drinking fountain near by she brought some water in a small cup, which she always carried with her. Leonora drank some and it seemed to revive her.

“Let us go now. I feel better,” she said; but she walked with great effort through the Park, and Lispeth saw that she would be unable to go even the short distance to her home. Begging her to be seated on a bench near the entrance, she

made her way to the corner and asked a boy to call a cab. It was not long before one arrived. The cabman lifted the drooping girl and placed her within. When they reached home the kind-hearted man followed Lispeth into the house with Leonora in his strong arms. He carried her upstairs to her own room and laid her gently on a low couch saying:—

“The poor child. It is the heat sure. This hot day is out of season.”

Lispeth paid and dismissed him with thanks for his kindness, then turned her attention to Leonora. Not a moment too soon, for she found the young girl had swooned quite away. She hastened to remove her outdoor garments, brought some water, and then, throwing herself on her knees beside the couch, worked over her, chafing her hands and bathing her face, until the sweet brown eyes slowly opened and the color began to return to the white lips.

“You are better now, darling,” said Lispeth. “Lie perfectly quiet and I will fetch you some wine.”

She hurried from the room, and descended to the dining-room. As she passed Mr. Arnstein's private room, she noticed that the door was ajar and heard voices within. She proceeded to the dining-room, poured out a glass of wine and was returning upstairs when some words, which fell upon her ear, caused her to stop in spite of herself and to sink in despair upon the stairs, where she remained long enough to compose herself ere she re-entered Leonora's room. Seating herself by the couch, she said:

“Drink this wine, dear. It will strengthen you.”

Leonora obeyed and then fell wearily back among the pillows. She lay with her eyes closed and after a while sank quietly to sleep.

The words which Lispeth had heard kept ringing in her ears. She could hear again Mr. Arnstein's voice saying:—

“This must be settled soon, as I sail for Europe the 20th. The visitor's reply did not reach her, but her master's next words filled her heart with dismay—“No

that would be impossible, as I take my daughter with me; but I do not intend to close my house."

Lispeth sat looking at the sleeping girl. "She cannot, she shall not go," muttered the old woman. "She shall not be dragged over there; perhaps to be forced into a loveless marriage to advance the interests of one whose sole thought is wealth and the power it brings." She sank into a reverie, which lasted till she was aroused by voices and foot-steps in the hall. She hurried to the window, and, looking out, saw Mr. Arnstein and his visitor leave the house together. A look of determination settled upon her face. She made hasty preparations for a walk, and, going into the kitchen she bade a young maid-of-all-work, who was helping the cook prepare dinner, watch by Leonora's side until her return, saying she must go for the doctor.

VI.

Lispeth returned accompanied by a tall, gray-haired man with a kindly face and gentle manner. Leonora was awake, but, on trying to raise herself to a sitting position when she saw the doctor enter, she found herself so weak that she was glad to lie back among the pillows at his bidding. He seated himself by her side, and soon won her confidence by his kind words.

"It is only because I am so weary, Doctor—so very weary all the time."

"Poor child," he said in an undertone, as he busied himself among his medicines. "Too much study for her strength and too much confinement for her years." He gave some directions to Lispeth and then arose to go, saying he would call again in the morning. She followed him into the hall and said in anxious tones:—

"You will tell her father that she needs entire change of air and scene. And O,

Doctor, please be sure to say that she must have no excitement, but advise sending her to some quiet country place."

"I will do so. You have done well to explain all to me, and I will do what I can to help you carry out your wishes. How like her mother is the child. I can hardly realize that so many years have passed away since death took that proud and happy mother from her little one. I felt almost as if she lay before me—the very tones of her voice are the same."

"Yes, she is like her in face and form, but she has less of her mother's spirit. She is more gentle and yielding, and far less joyous in her disposition. Still that may be due to the life she has lead," said Lispeth with a sigh.

The Doctor left her saying,—“You know, my good woman, that if you are ever in need of a friend, you can call upon Dr. Brewster and he will gladly serve you.”

The dinner hour passed without bringing the master of the house. The clock was striking ten when Lispeth heard his

step in the hall. She hastened downstairs and knocked at the door of the room where her memorable conversation with her master had taken place six years before. In response to the knock his voice bade her enter. Lispeth's visit at that late hour surprised Mr. Arnstein. She never intruded upon his privacy. In fact, although the management of his house was in her charge, he saw her but seldom. Johanna, a young German girl employed as maid-of-all-work, was always summoned when he required anything. Unless something important forced Lispeth into a conversation with her master she never crossed his path. It seemed as if one tried to avoid the other; yet each knew perfectly well that they were bound together by a common tie—and that tie was Leonora.

Lispeth entered just far enough to close the door behind her and stood with her back against it. She told him of Leonora's illness. "And in your absence," she continued, "I summoned the nearest physician. He will call again in the

morning, and you can see him yourself."

"Why did you not send for Dr. Zacharias?" asked Mr. Arnstein.

"He is too far away, and Leonora was very ill. If she requires further medical attendance he can be called. But it is not medicine she needs. It is rest—rest. She has been taxed beyond her strength, and has broken down under your stern discipline," said Lispeth fearlessly. "If you wish her to die, continue the same treatment and she will soon be beyond all help."

Mr. Arnstein frowned darkly; but he said not a word in reply to all this. Lispeth's tones vibrated with suppressed anger; and her master did not like the expression in her eye. He had encountered that same look once or twice in years gone by, and he knew that the wisest course to pursue with this strange woman was to smooth down her anger, and yield to her if that which roused her appertained to Leonora's welfare.

"I will see the child," he said at last,

and, taking up a candle, he proceeded up stairs followed by Lispeth.

Leonora was sleeping. Mr. Arnstein raised the candle above his head and looked upon the young girl. One white hand lay upon the counterpane. The dark hair falling in waves upon her brow, and the long curling lashes resting upon her cheek, contrasted strongly with her pale face. He could not fail to see the truth of Lispeth's words, although he made no comment as he turned away. On reaching the door, he paused to say:—

“At what hour in the morning will the doctor call?”

“At nine o'clock.”

“I will see him.”

Mr. Arnstein withdrew and Lispeth heard him descending the stairs. She knew he had returned to his room where he worked sometimes far into the night.

The next morning Leonora expressed no desire to rise; and Lispeth was only too glad to have her remain in bed. The doctor came at the appointed time.

“How do you find your patient this

morning, Doctor?" said Mr. Arnstein, as he entered the room and stood at the foot of Leonora's bed.

"Just as I expected to find her—about the same. She requires neither medicine nor medical attendance, but perfect rest bodily and mentally. Her condition is such that she will regain her strength very slowly."

"Can nothing be done to build her up more quickly?" asked Mr. Arnstein.

"In cases of this kind, where the nervous system also is much run down in consequence of too great strain, the return to health and strength is very slow," replied the doctor. "Complete change of air and scene, however, would do much for her; but she must have absolute quiet and be kept free from excitement."

There was silence for a few moments while the doctor wrote a prescription, which he handed to Lisbeth, saying:—

"You will find that an excellent tonic. Give it to her three times each day." Then he arose to go.

"Come this way, Doctor," said Mr.

Arnstein, opening the door into an adjoining room. "I wish to speak with you alone." Closing the door between them he said,—“Do you not think a sea voyage and some travel abroad would prove beneficial? I am going to England—thence to Germany. I intended to take my daughter with me.”

“When do you sail?”

“The twentieth of this month.”

“I should not advise it,” said the doctor promptly. Your daughter could not stand the fatigue. Later in the summer, say in August, she may have regained her strength enough to travel. Quiet for a time, pure country air and out-door life only will restore her to health.”

An expression of great dissatisfaction settled upon Mr. Arnstein's face as he listened. It was some time before he spoke. The doctor waited patiently for him to break the silence, feeling that he could say no more to gain for his young patient what she really needed, and prevent what Lispeth seemed to dread so much for her darling just now—a journey across the

seas. Everything depended upon the decision of this man whose plans were all laid, and who saw the fulfillment of one of his cherished hopes delayed. Still Leonora's health was a matter of importance to him. That must be perfectly restored at all costs. Finally he said:—

“I do not know where to send her. I will never consent to her going to a summer resort. If I could find board for her in some quiet country home, that might do; though I have so little time now to seek for a suitable place.”

“Allow me to suggest a plan,” said the doctor. I know of a small furnished cottage in the country. It is for sale, but I think the owner would rent it for the summer.”

“Where is it?”

“On the Hudson. Up among the Highlands. A quiet spot, and very healthful.”

“I will take the owner's address, in case I should decide to act upon your advice. The place may suit me.”

After the doctor had gone Mr. Arn-

stein entered his private room, and, throwing himself into his favorite arm-chair, remained a long time buried in thought. Deep lines gathered upon his forehead and his face assumed an expression anything but pleasant. Finally he arose, and, going to his desk he hastily wrote a few lines. Summoning Johanna he gave the note to her saying:—

“I wish you to go to this address. You will have no difficulty in finding the place. Anyone will direct you. Ask for Dr. Zacharias, and, if you find him in, give him this note; if not you may leave it for him. Make all possible haste. I will await your return.”

Johanna departed. Mr. Arnstein paced restlessly up and down during her absence; finally she returned with the information that Dr. Zacharias would be unable to respond to his call, as he had met with an accident the night before, having been thrown from his carriage and seriously injured.

Mr. Arnstein gave orders to have his

lunch served at once. He ate it hastily and then left the house.

Several days passed during which Lisbeth heard nothing of Mr. Arnstein's plans for the summer. She was anxiously awaiting his decision concerning Leonora. She had fully made up her mind that if her master should act contrary to Dr. Brewster's advice, and carry out his plan of taking Leonora abroad with him, she must prevent it. She knew it lay in her power to do so; but she desired if possible not to use that power; and she hoped that Mr. Arnstein would see for himself the importance of Leonora's restoration to health. Lisbeth saw even less of her master during those days than usual. His time seemed to be entirely occupied, for, after leaving the house in the morning he seldom returned until late at night.

Leonora remained about the same. She took but little interest in anything. Lisbeth would draw her couch near the window each day, thinking she might enjoy looking out, but the young girl simply reclined among the pillows with eyes

closed most of the time. She did not even care to talk, so Lispeth would sit for hours by the other window, knitting—knitting, and seldom speaking. One evening just about dusk she heard her master's step in the hall below. He entered his private room, and all was quiet for about two hours. Then Johanna came to Lispeth saying that her master wished to see her. She obeyed the summons at once, telling Johanna to remain with her young mistress.

Mr. Arnstein was sitting at a table strewn with papers. He pushed them aside when Lispeth entered, settled back in his arm-chair, and motioned Lispeth to be seated. She paid no heed to the motion, but remained standing just opposite him.

“I wish to tell you, Lispeth, that it has been my intention to go abroad this summer and take Leonora with me, but her illness has upset all my plans regarding her, and I shall be obliged to go alone. I expect to return in about four months. My nephew, Leon Arnstein, will accom-

pany me. His education is finished and he is coming to America for the purpose of making it his home. He has known for years that a wife to share that home will be his also—a wife both accomplished and beautiful. It will not be long now ere Leonora will bear the name of Arnstein legally. During the next four months I also intend to renew my search for the casket which contains her large inheritance. I shall use every means to find the mate to the silken mitt. Its owner has the casket in her possession or knows where it is hidden. I have learned the place where Marie Rabowski lived in England, and it is there I intend to go first, for I expect to obtain some clue to her whereabouts if she still lives; if not, I hope to learn some particulars of her life and where she died, which will serve my purpose. If the work which I have before me requires more than four months, I will return home and remain long enough to see the marriage, on which I have set my heart, consummated. It will take place shortly after my return,

no doubt. Then I will arrange my affairs so that I can devote my whole time to the search for the casket."

Lispeth stood looking steadily at her master while he was speaking, and there was something in that look which made him feel uncomfortable. She took advantage of a slight pause to say:—

"And is the one most concerned in your plans not to be considered at all? Are you not going to consult Leonora's happiness in this union? Would you marry her to a man whom she has never known?"

"Yes!" thundered Mr. Arnstein whose passion was aroused to white heat at the cool words and calm manner of the woman before him. "Who are you to pass judgment on my actions? I can turn you from my door if I choose, and I will do it if you ever dare to question my authority again!"

The fierce gleam in this man's eye and the intense passion in his words would have cowed almost anyone else, but it seemed not to affect Lispeth in the least.

She advanced a few steps towards him, and with eyes looking fearlessly into his, said in low quick tones:—

“You may threaten to separate me from her whom I have promised to guard and care for to my life’s end, but you will never carry out that threat. You tried it once and you will not dare to try it again!” She paused a moment facing her master, leaning with both hands on the table which separated them. “However,” continued she, with a slight bend of her head and a trace of sarcasm in her tones, “I shall not question your authority again. If Leonora’s heart is in this marriage your plan will be carried out; if not, it is possible that she herself will be the one to question your authority.”

Lispeth’s last words seemed to mollify her master somewhat. He became more composed and something like a smile overspread his features as he said:—

“Ah! she cannot help but be proud of the love of a man like Leon Arnstein. He is rich—handsome—talented. She is young, and, unless very different from

her sex in general, will be susceptible to the attentions of such a man. Besides, has not her training been such that she will yield more readily to my wishes?"

Lispeth made no reply to her master's last words.

The silence which followed lasted some time. Finally Mr. Arnstein spoke again:—

"I wish you to be seated, Lispeth. I have some orders to give you before I leave and may as well do so now. It was not my intention to close the house during my absence; but, in that respect also, I have been obliged to change my plan. I have rented a house in the country for the summer. It is furnished, but I wish you to go there to-morrow and see if anything more is needed for comfort. You can take the boat to Newberg. There you will find a stage which runs between Newberg and West Point, a distance of about eight miles. This place, which is called Mountain Villa, is about three miles north of West Point in the very heart of the Highlands. The driver will

set you down at the gate. I have already taken one day to inspect the place and surroundings, as I wished to satisfy myself that it was as Dr. Brewster described—healthful and secluded. It suited me in every respect. The nearest house towards Newberg is fully a mile away. It is a farm house occupied by a widow and her two sons. The youngest, a lad of sixteen, I have engaged for the summer to help about the place. If Johanna will not go to the country you can find some young girl, who lives in Newberg or thereabouts, to serve you as maid-of-all-work. The house is a tiny affair, and the grounds though pretty are small. There is a large handsome house, whose extensive grounds join those of Mountain Villa, but which is unoccupied. I was told that it had been closed several years. The owner is in Europe and the place looks forlorn enough. So you see if quiet will restore Leonora's health she will have it there."

While her master was speaking, Lisbeth's anxiety was removed for the pres-

ent concerning Leonora. It was with difficulty that she suppressed a sigh of relief as Mr. Arnstein handed her the key of the cottage, and gave her some final directions as to the time and manner of their departure from the city. Her heart was lighter than it had been for many days as she ascended the stairs to tell the good news to Leonora.

VII.

Among the picturesque Highlands which overlook the Hudson River there nestled a pretty gothic cottage, painted white with green blinds and small diamond-shaped window panes. Roses clambered in great profusion over the porch and in the gables of the roof. Sitting in a careless attitude on the highest step of the porch was Leonora, who unconsciously gave the finishing touch to this lovely study in pink and white and green. She wore a simple white dress relieved by a bouquet of pink roses at her belt. By her side was a large bowl which she had been filling with the beautiful flowers she loved. Her task completed she leaned against the pillar behind her and sat looking dreamily about her.

It was towards the close of a lovely day in early June—one of those perfect days in the “Month of Roses ” when the

air is laden with their fragrance. The glad sunshine, the blue and cloudless sky, the gentle breeze which sways the foliage and plays with the daisies and buttercups nodding in the tall grass—all combine to make this the month of months to lovers of nature.

Nearly three weeks have passed since LISPETH and her young charge left New York for this lovely nook in the Highlands. Leonora seemed to take a new interest in life from the hour that the picturesque and ever changing beauty of the Hudson began to unfold itself to her wondering eyes, as she reclined among the cushions arranged for her comfort on the deck of the steamer, which bore her from the hot dusty city. Everything was a revelation to her, and, although she was for many days too weak to do more than sit by the window or on the porch, when the weather permitted, she was content. Two days before she had strayed for the first time beyond the grounds of Mountain Villa into a bit of woodland near by, and seated herself in its cool shade by the

side of a tiny brook which leaped along over a rocky bed. The songs of the birds, the rustle of the foliage, and the babbling of the brook, were music in her ears. On this day she had ventured in another direction—into the grounds of the adjoining estate. Neglected and forlorn as it would appear to those who had seen it when the doors of the fine large mansion had stood hospitably open, when the grounds were kept in order, when young figures might be seen flitting in and out, and the music of young voices was heard among the trees; yet even now it seemed to Leonora a perfect wilderness of beauty, the grand old trees, the grass grown paths, the pretty summer-house almost hidden by the roses which grew over it in wildest profusion. But perhaps what interested her most was the house itself. It stood facing the East on a slight eminence in the midst of terraced grounds. Six Doric columns adorned the front and supported the roof which projected over the porch. On the south side was a large bow window, whose low casements

opened directly upon the terrace. On the north side, about twenty feet back from the front of the house, a wing projected. A wide balcony enclosed by a handsome balustrade extended from the front porch back to this wing and across its front, terminating in a flight of steps which led to the carriage drive below. Leonora, who possessed an innate love of the beautiful both in Nature and Art, was enchanted with the beauty and symmetry of this deserted house. She lingered for some time, wandering hither and thither, pausing, now and then, on some slight eminence to gaze at the beautiful landscape spread out before her. Finally she reluctantly turned her face homeward, laden with the roses she had gathered from the rich abundance about her.

She was awaiting the arrival of the stage which was to bring Lispeth, who had gone to the city early that morning for the second time since they had left it. The sound of wheels reached her ear, and soon the rumbling old stage came in sight. She hurried down the narrow

graveled walk to meet Lispeth as she alighted at the gate. Lovely indeed looked the young girl as she greeted the old woman with a glad smile. So also thought the gentleman who was now left the sole occupant of the stage. His traveling companion had interested him all along—this strange looking old woman who sat opposite him. Several parcels were in her lap and by her side was a covered basket, which she seemed to guard with special care. Leonora did not see the gentleman. In fact, he had leaned back out of sight, but where he could see her through the torn curtains of the old fashioned stage coach. She relieved Lispeth of her parcels; but when Joe, the chore boy, who also appeared at the arrival of the stage, lifted the basket to carry to the house, the woman took it quickly from him and told him to take the parcels to Johanna.

The stage passed on. Leonora proceeded up the path; but Lispeth stopped long enough to wrest from the gate-post a flimsy board sign, which read

“For sale.”

Then with a smile of satisfaction on the grim old face she made her way to the house, carrying the basket, which was so heavy that she was obliged to stop and rest several times.

“Do come with me, Lispeth, into the grounds of the great house,” said Leonora the next day. “I want you to see what a beautiful place it is. So many lovely nooks, the dearest little summer-house, and such a fine view of the river!”

“But, child,” replied Lispeth, “we will be trespassing.”

“I know it; but surely we can do no harm. The house is closed. No one lives there. Let us go, Lispeth,” pleaded the young girl.

“I will go this time,” said Lispeth, who was glad to see the interest which Leonora seemed to take in her new surroundings, and how the listless girl of a few weeks ago was improving each day by reason of this new life in the open air—free as a bird to roam about and enjoy the beauties of Nature, which revealed

themselves to her on every side. "But," continued she, "I do not think it best to go very often, especially alone, into those enchanted grounds, as they seem to you. There are the fields, the woods, and many delightful walks along the river, which we can take at will."

"I promise not to go again without you, Lispeth."

Leonora lead the way to a broken place in the fence through which she had found ingress to the adjoining grounds the day before. They were soon roaming about here, there, and everywhere. They remained standing on the front porch for some time, enjoying the beautiful landscape spread out before them—the river almost at their feet and the sweep of country beyond. Then they walked along the balcony, descended the steps to the drive, and wended their way along through various paths, till at last they seated themselves to rest on a rustic bench around which the grass grew tall and rank.

"It is strange," remarked Lispeth,

“that all the blinds should be closed save those two.

“Which two?” asked Leonora. “O, I see. Those blinds of the two upper windows in the wing. Why, I think they were all closed yesterday. I noticed that wing particularly on account of the window in the gable end with the cunning little balcony around it. Still I am not quite certain.”

Where they were sitting they had only a side view of the window in the gable end of the wing. They could not see that the casement was wide open and that a gentleman was sitting in an easy chair just inside, smoking leisurely. After a while he threw his cigar over the balcony rail, and, going to one of the front windows to which Lispeth referred, looked out. He gave a low whistle of astonishment as he beheld those two intruders, sitting comfortably on the bench under the shade of a large tree, evidently feeling quite at home; for Lispeth had produced the inevitable knitting, and Leonora was reading aloud from a small book. He

wondered what it was, and wished himself nearer — at least within sound of her voice. He recognized in the old woman his traveling companion of the previous day, and the young girl as the one whom he had seen by the gate. Soon a change in the position of the old woman caused him to fear detection and he withdrew hastily.

Another hour passed by. The lengthening shadows warned Lispeth that it was growing late.

“Come, little one,” said she; “it is time to go home.”

“I suppose it is; but, Lispeth, let us just walk around by the little summer-house I have told you about. You have not seen it yet, and I want a few more of those lovely roses.”

The old woman consented, and Leonora lead the way through a narrow path, which wound in and out among the trees until they came to an open space in the centre of which stood the rose covered summer house.

“O, is not this a charming spot?” cried

Leonora, as she clapped her hands with delight and looked about her. "Just a few of the roses now, Lispeth, dear, and then we will go home."

The young girl picked a few within reach, but there were some higher up which she coveted.

"O, I cannot reach them and they are the loveliest of all, Lispeth."

"Permit me to reach them for you," said a manly voice; and ere Leonora had time to recover from her surprise at the sudden appearance of the stranger, he had broken off several of the choicest roses and presented them to the blushing girl, saying in hearty tones, while a genial smile lighted up his handsome face,—

"Pardon me if I startled you. I saw that you were longing for some of those roses, and I desired to gratify you."

Leonora shyly murmured her thanks as she took them. Lispeth, however, had taken in the situation more quickly. She thought of those open blinds, and it flashed upon her that this man was not a

stranger in these grounds; she hastened to say,—

“I beg you to excuse us if we are trespassing. We believed the house to be unoccupied else we would not have ventured into the grounds. In fact, I have been informed that the owner is in Europe.”

“Indeed,” replied the gentleman, “I thank you for your neighborly visit into these deserted grounds. The owner realizes that he has been in Europe too long—far too long, when he sees the desolation which surrounds his old home.”

Then he lifted his hat, saying as he withdrew,—“I hope you will come very often. Truly you will be conferring a favor by so doing.”

The gentleman disappeared behind some shubbery in the rear. Lispeth and Leonora made their way around the front of the house and were soon within the grounds of Mountain Villa.

VIII.

Several days passed by, during which Leonora did not go near the neighboring estate, but confined her roving to the daisy-studded fields and along the banks of the tiny stream which ran through the woods near by. Lispeth usually accompanied her, for, although she had reached her seventy-fourth year, she was still vigorous, and this kind of life suited her exactly. Once in passing the massive front gate, which barred the entrance to their neighbor's grounds from the high-road, Leonora lingered long enough to look through the palings. A wide path led directly to the house and she could see that it was just as she had found it on the day of her first visit—closed even to those two upper blinds of the north wing. She hastened on, telling Lispeth that she believed its owner had again deserted it. What was her surprise one morning a few days later, to see smoke curling from one of

the chimneys in the rear. The trees hid most of the house from view. Curiosity getting the better of her, she slipped out before breakfast, hastened to the front gate, and peeped in. She lingered but a moment, and returned speedily to burst in upon Lispeth with the news that the doors and windows of the great house were all open—"And," continued she, "they seem to be cleaning and airing the carpets and furniture. There are men working everywhere in the grounds. I believe the owners have returned, Lispeth. O, I wonder who they are."

Leonora paused to take breath and Lispeth took the opportunity to say:—

"I do not know, child. But come to your breakfast and leave the great house to take care of itself."

What she had seen gave Leonora much food for thought and speculation concerning her neighbors. It was not to be wondered at considering the life she had lived. She had plenty of time, and, although it did not hang heavy on her hands, she was young and ready for any-

thing new. After supper she was sitting on the steps of the porch at Lispeth's feet, enjoying the beauty of the summer evening. She was unusually quiet and thoughtful for a long time. Finally she said:—

“O, Lispeth, it is so lovely!”

“What is so lovely, child?”

“Everything—this dear little cottage, the beautiful scenery all around us, and the freedom—O, the freedom, Lispeth. When I contrast it with the daily routine of my life for years, it makes me shudder to think of returning to it. Every day of that life filled up, and every hour of the day, year in and year out—practice, study, walk, read,—all in the same monotonous order. Instead of the soft turf beneath my feet—hard pavement; instead of these beautiful fields—long streets with rows of houses closely built. No wonder I loved St. John's Park, for there only in all my life did I ever see anything green; but it is nothing in comparison with my favorite haunt in those woods by the dear little

brook. I love it all and I have never been so happy in my life."

"I am glad you are happy, dearie. Your welfare is old Lispeth's chief thought. You have naturally a happy disposition, that you inherited from your mother; but you have less of her spirit. In some respects you are like your father. He was gentle and peace-loving, fond of quiet and a deep lover of nature."

Leonora turned quickly and looked at Lispeth in surprise. Ere she could speak the old woman continued:—

"I know what you would say, child—that it does not sound at all like the man whom you have been taught to call father."

"Whom I have been taught to call father? O, Lispeth, surely you cannot mean that—that"—

"I mean that your own dear father died when you were two years old and that he whom you call father is in truth your grandfather."

Lispeth paused. The silence which followed remained unbroken. The old

woman saw tears glistening in Leonora's eyes as she sat looking steadily before her, and she realized more fully how keenly the young girl felt the loneliness of her life at times. Finally she said as she stroked the soft white hand resting on her knee:—

“It is through no fault of mine that you have been thus deceived—brought up in ignorance of your true name. Had I not given my word to Mr. Arnstein that I would keep this long silence, you might have been taken from me, and I would have been unable to keep the most important part of my promise to your father on his death-bed—that was to watch over and care for you so long as I should live. When I gave that promise I believed that you would grow up under my protection, and that none of your own name would ever claim you. They never have; but your grandfather on your mother's side sought for you, and, as your rightful guardian has thus far ordered your life. It has not been possible for me to keep the rest of my promise to your father—

to teach you to love and honor the memory of your parents, because I would have been obliged to reveal to you what I am doing now. Your father could not have foreseen the events which followed his death, and which changed the circumstances of your life. When I found that it would not be possible for me to keep that part of my promise, and that I must, by my silence allow you to grow up believing your real name to be Leonora Arnstein, I determined to make reparation for that injustice by telling you about your parents, when a fitting time should come, and when I could trust to your own discretion about making known to your grandfather your knowledge of his share in this deception. I hope you will forgive me, Leonora, if I have seemed to be a party in it. I am sure you will not blame me when you know all, and will see that I have acted for your good."

"I have nothing to forgive, Lispeth. You are my best and truest friend, I am sure," said Leonora. "Dear faithful soul," she murmured, as she drew near

the old woman. She let her head rest on Lispeth's knee and said softly,—“Tell me now, Lispeth, about my parents.”

“I will tell you the story of your mother's life as she told it to me. I knew her only after her marriage. Her name was Judith Arnstein. She was born in London and lived there until she was in her sixteenth year. Her mother died when she was three years old, and, the following year her father went to live in Berlin, leaving her, his only child, to the care of his brother Reuben, a wealthy merchant, who lived in a populous part of London. He was childless, and his wife took the motherless little girl into her heart and home. She was the light of her life, so long as the good woman lived. She died when Judith was about fifteen. It was then that her father claimed her and took her away to live with him in Germany. He had not married again, but had devoted his whole life to the accumulation of wealth. A few years after Judith left her uncle Reuben's home, he married a second time; and by

that wife he had one child, a son, who has now grown to manhood. His name is Leon Arnstein, and he is your father's only living relative.

"Your mother was beautiful. She was good too, and, although somewhat high spirited, she was very affectionate and generous hearted. Her childhood had been a most happy one, passed with an uncle and aunt who were very kind to her, and to whom she was devotedly attached. She was suddenly transported to a home among strangers, having for her daily companion a sour-tempered old woman, her father's housekeeper. She lived in constant fear of offending a stern parent, whose anger at a task not done to suit him found vent in harsh invectives, and often resulted in severe punishment. What wonder that the joyousness of her nature became subdued; her voice, which had filled her uncle Reuben's home with melody in days gone by, when she would go about singing for very gladness of heart, was seldom heard; and her dispo-

sition, docile enough under kind treatment, changed into something like rebelliousness by the constant restraint under which she lived. Two years of such a life made the step she took pardonable. Love was as essential to that young creature as sunshine is to flowers. She hungered for it, and, when it came to her with its softening influence, she was secretly very happy once again, yet fearful lest her new found happiness should be discovered."

"Your father was Karl Sturmer, a young student at the University of Berlin. How he met and wooed the young Jewish maiden I do not know. I only know that she loved the gentle, fair-haired youth. Their sudden marriage, however, was brought about by an act on the part of Mr. Arnstein. It made them both realize the strength of their love for one another. Your mother was sitting at her embroidery one morning when her father entered and informed her she must make preparations for her marriage with a man whom he had chosen to be her husband.

He told her the betrothal would be celebrated in true Jewish fashion one week from that evening, and her marriage would take place the following Sabbath. Her heart was filled with dismay at this news; but it gave place to horror when she learned the name of her future husband—a man old enough to be her father and whom she secretly disliked, although he stood high in the estimation of her father and his friends. He was very rich and she knew that was enough to satisfy her father. She listened to all he had to say and answered not a word, for she felt that reason and justice would be sacrificed to a love of riches. The days slipped quickly by. Your mother participated in the celebration of her betrothal in obedience to her father's commands; for previous experience had taught her that to oppose his wishes meant close confinement until she should yield. She did not speak of her love for your father; nor ask his consent to her marriage; for she knew it would not be granted and she feared to arouse his wrath. So on the

eve of her marriage she simply slipped away, and before her father learned of her departure she had already become the wife of the man she loved, and was on her way to a home in this country.”

“Your father had always been treated with cool indifference by his step-brothers and sisters. His home was not a congenial one; but he loved his father, who, notwithstanding his eccentricities, was just and kind at heart. Felix Sturmer, however, had that pride of race which had ever been the chief characteristic of his family. When he received a letter from his son, asking his consent to his marriage with Judith Arnstein, telling of his love for the young Jewess, that proud man’s anger knew no bounds, as his reply to that letter showed. He threatened to disown a son who would dare to marry a daughter of a race he so despised. But your father believed that in time he would be forgiven; and, when he learned of the marriage which Mr. Arnstein had arranged for his daughter, he determined to save her from such a fate. His love

for your mother was true. He believed true love to be a gift from God; and to enter into a loveless marriage was a sin against God."

IX.

“So they were married. I do not think in your parent’s case that love triumphed over creed; for the difference in their religion was something which did not enter their minds. Even in after years that question never came up to mar their happiness. Only once in the six years that they lived together did I ever hear your mother speak at any great length of the faith in which she had been reared, and which she really never gave up. It was not required of her. She was truly religious and lived and died in the Jewish faith, although she knew herself to be an outcast from her kind. The time to which I refer was about three months after you came to gladden the hearts of that loving pair. They had been married something over five years, and it seemed as if their happiness was then complete. A prouder young mother never lived, as she sat in a

low chair with her baby on her lap. I can see her now so plainly. She was more beautiful than ever, and she had that sweet charm about her which maternity always brings."

"Lispeth," she said, "surely it is not possible that I love my God the less because I love my Christian husband and my child so much. If one of my own faith should come to me and say that in marrying thus I have committed a sin, and in order to save my soul I must give up these dear ones, I would trust that soul to Him who created love. Do we not pray to the same God? And would He, who is all wise, have put this great love into my heart, if it had not been right for me to accept so precious a gift? Still I would like my little one to be brought up in the faith of the Jewish people. I shall teach her all that is best in it; for is it not the foundation of the Christian religion, to which my husband so closely adheres? Then, when she is old enough I wish her to read, study, and judge for herself."

“Your mother did not know that her husband had been sitting all the time where he could hear what she was saying. He came from an adjoining room with the book he had been reading in his hand and said gently;—

“It shall be as you desire, Judith. If our little one grows up to be one half as good a woman, and as lovely in her home as her mother, I will chance her happiness in the world to come.”

“With that he stooped and kissed her. That was all that ever passed between them on the subject of their different faiths. They were very happy in their own way; and in few homes could there be found such love and harmony. It was a modest little home, but they enjoyed every comfort. Your father gave certain hours each day in schools, teaching his own language. He also had as many pupils on the violin as he could attend to. Alas! Their happiness was short-lived. You were only one year old when your mother was taken suddenly ill and died before we realized her danger. She had

inflammation of the lungs. The shock to your father was so great that he never recovered. He failed visibly, and ere the year rolled away he had followed his beloved wife. Now you have the story that I promised to tell you. This is the eve of your eighteenth birthday; for to-morrow will be the fifteenth of June."

Lispeth paused, and the silence which followed was broken only by the sound of Leonora gently weeping at the story of her parents' lives and their early death.

"I am glad to know that my mother's childhood was a happy one and that she had only two years of a life like mine."

"Yes, and it was because of her happy childhood that she chafed under the restraint of those two years. She had no affection for her father notwithstanding the tie of blood. Although your grandfather has always been very stern and exacting with you, he has never given vent to those bursts of passion of his younger days, which used to terrify your mother. He has never inflicted upon you the severe punishments, which she was forced

to endure for some trivial misdemeanor. Perhaps it is because some one has stood between you and him, whose anger he has feared to rouse. I do not wish to destroy what affection you may have for your grandfather, for, in a certain sense, he has done his duty by you and deserves your gratitude at least. You have received an excellent education, and a training which has fitted you to occupy any social position in the world. Give to him as much love as you can, and excuse the mistakes of his earlier years. I have told you these details of your mother's life to show you why she married as she did. Should your grandfather ever command you to do anything against which your heart and reason rebels, you need not flee, as she did in her helplessness, but know that so long as old Lispeth lives you have a stanch friend, and one who can give you a home also, if necessary. Be prompted by the dictates of your own conscience, and if you need advice come to me."

"I promise, Lispeth. But you have

told me very little concerning my father's people. I only know that my name is Leonora Sturmer."

"It is growing late, dear. No more to-night. You shall know everything some day. Your dear father left a letter in my charge with the injunction to give it to you when the right time should come, according to my judgment. I am not ready yet. Trust me yet a little longer. However, there is one thing I wish to give you now. It is this small parcel. It contains a key and written directions where to find that letter. I do this in case anything should happen to me. Guard the parcel carefully; and by no means open it. I know that I can trust you."

"You can trust me, Lispeth," said the young girl as she received the parcel. "There is one question which I wish you would answer now. You have said that my father always believed that he would be forgiven. Is it possible that he remained disowned—that his father, who was just and kind at heart, as you say, never relented towards a son whose only

fault was that he loved and married a Jewess?"

"Your grandfather softened towards his son and so far relented as to write to him, but he would never have acknowledged his Jewish wife, nor any children by that marriage. You are as much cast off by that proud family as if you were nothing to them. In fact, I think they do not even know that there is such a child, for the letter came too late. It reached here a few days after your father's death. But he never gave up hope that he might some day hear from the father who had cast him off. When he gave you into my charge, he gave me also the privilege of opening any letters which might come for him. He trusted me to act according to my own judgment should anything come up which affected your welfare. And I trust I have acted for the best in all things. The letter of Felix Sturmer to his son I have preserved with the one from your father to you."

"Then my mother's father really was more kind—more forgiving in the end;

for did he not seek me out and claim me as his own?"

"He sought you out, to be sure; but he was not actuated by love or forgiveness towards the child who had committed, in his eyes, an unpardonable wrong. There are other motives underlying all his actions—but enough of this; be happy, little one, and enjoy your daily blessings, for they are many, notwithstanding the loneliness you may sometimes feel. Now good-night, my child. It is time to go to rest."

X.

The next morning Leonora was standing at her bed-room window looking out upon the freshness of the morning. This window commanded a view of part of the carriage drive and one of the narrow, freshly graveled paths running parallel to the hedge which separated the grounds of Mountain Villa from those of "Leighton Manor," as the neighboring estate was called. Men were still at work there, and it seemed to Leonora as though the grounds were becoming more beautiful each day under the skilled handiwork of the gardener in charge and his men. She could see the rustic seats and urns of flowers here and there. The fountain so long silent was playing and sparkling in the sunshine. She had stood there but a short time when she saw a gray-haired lady walking slowly along the drive, leaning on the arm of a gentleman. Leonora recognized him at once as the one

who had gathered the roses for her on the day of her visit to the summer-house. They paused a few minutes while the gentleman gave some directions to one of the men, who was occupied in clipping the hedge. The lady stood looking at the pretty gothic cottage while the gentleman was thus engaged. When he had finished she seemed to ask him some question about it, for he looked that way and said something in reply. Then they passed on and were soon lost to sight among the trees.

The day wore away and evening came again. Leonora was sitting in a low chair on the porch, while Lispeth sat just inside their tiny parlor by the window.

"O, Lispeth, two gentlemen are coming through the gate!" said Leonora in low hurried tones. "Why! It is Dr. Brewster and the gentleman who lives in the great house." She had no time to say more, but arose to receive them. Dr. Brewster's voice greeted her ere he had reached the porch.

"Well, how does my patient find her-

self? I presume she is not expecting a visit from her doctor here. But it is the unexpected that always happens you know. This is my friend, Dr. Leighton—Miss Sturmer. It seems a needless form to introduce you; for you are neighbors and have met before, I believe. I want to make my friends—friends to each other.”

Leonora gave her hand to the gentleman who was looking at her with eyes that smiled, as she thought, at this reference of Dr. Brewster’s to the little episode of the roses and the summer-house. She blushed prettily as she said:—

“It gives me pleasure to meet you again, and this time on my own side of the line. We have not trespassed since; but I cannot say how long it would be before I, at least, must yield to the temptation of a stroll in those grounds. They possess great attractions for me; and especially now since Art combined with Nature has made them still more beautiful.”

“I am sorry,” said Dr. Leighton, “that

you have felt any hesitancy in accepting my invitation to rove about there as much as you choose. You know I said you would be conferring a favor by so doing."

Lispeth brought some chairs for the gentlemen. Dr. Brewster seated himself in one nearest the window and began talking to Lispeth, who had resumed her seat just inside. Leonora heard her say something about having given up the tonic several days ago, but still insisting upon two hours rest in the middle of the day. She knew they were discussing her health and paid no further attention to what they were saying. In fact, she was already at her ease with her new acquaintance, and they were soon conversing like old friends.

There was something about Richard Leighton which readily won him friends among the opposite sex. It was not personal beauty, for, although Nature had bestowed upon him a fair share of what constitutes good looks, one might see handsomer men every day. One would

be impressed at first by his distinguished bearing—later with a sense of his thorough manliness and strength of character. The intelligence expressed in his face, and the large, clear, steady gray eyes, so full of strength and sympathy, would cause the observer to forget the absence of mere regularity of features. He had passed so many years in caring for his invalid mother, and his constant solicitude for her well being, rendered him unusually sympathetic in his manner towards all womankind. Leonora felt something of this and that was the cause, no doubt, of his success in drawing her out; for she was usually very shy and reserved. Her life had much to do with that sensitiveness which caused her to shrink from meeting strangers. Before she was aware of it she was giving Richard Leighton an insight into her character, and creating in his mind an interest which was destined to become deeper and more absorbing as their friendship ripened. He was a thorough man of the world, and had had more time than most

men to study human nature. The past six years had been spent abroad, first in one place, then in another, as it seemed best for his mother's health. He had seen many phases of life and many different types of womanhood. Yet here was a young girl unlike any he had ever met. He found her thoughtful and intelligent beyond her years, still in many respects a veritable child. She seemed entirely free from the many feminine affectations to which he had become more or less accustomed in his association with women. Her childishness showed itself as she described the every day enjoyment of the simple life she was leading in the heart of nature. Her intelligence manifested itself as their conversation progressed. She could converse in the language of her father's native land, and was well versed in some of its best literature; yet her manner was entirely unlike the women of that country, and she seemed to have nothing in common with them.

They talked on unconscious of the passage of time. The sun had set. The

moon had risen and shone full upon Leonora. Richard Leighton thought he had never seen so lovely a picture as the young girl, sitting there in her white dress with a shawl of soft white material wrapped about her. Dr. Brewster had gone inside some time before, and had been engaged in earnest conversation with Lispeth. The murmur of their voices only reached the two outside. The elder man arose to go, but stood for a few moments in the door-way as if loth to interrupt the conversation which both seemed to be enjoying so much. Dr. Leighton was saying:—

“I hope you will come and see my mother soon; being quite an invalid she seldom goes out, and she is sometimes very lonely. I fear she will not be able to come here just yet, for she is not so well lately. Do not wait for her. She is at her best in the morning.”

“Well, my young friend,” said Dr. Brewster, “we must be going. We have made a long call for the first one—quite a neighborly visit.”

"It has seemed short to me," said Leonora artlessly. "How long do you remain in the country, Doctor? If I do not need you professionally, I like to see you very often."

"O, I return in the morning. There are those in the city who need me, and I must not tarry here. When I heard of the return of my old friends after six years' absence, I could not resist coming up to see them. Then, too, I wanted to see how my prescription was working with you. I find it has done wonders already. Good-night and good-bye too."

A few moments more and they were gone. Leonora stood leaning against a pillar of the porch for some time. Finally she turned and looked towards the great house. A portion of it was visible through the trees, and she saw a tall figure walking back and forth on the broad piazza in the moon-light. She lingered yet a moment, then entered the house, and went straight to her own room.

Dr. Brewster joined his young friend after a while, saying the night was too

lovely to be spent in bed. Richard produced some fine cigars, and the two men seated themselves for a chat and a smoke.

“That is a strange looking old woman at the cottage. What is her name, and what relation does she bear towards the young girl?” asked the younger man.

“Her name is Elizabeth Harned. No relation so far as I know. But she seems to be everything to her young charge—nurse, when she was a child—companion now, and housekeeper for Mr. Arnstein, Leonora’s grandfather. She is well educated, yet she seems used to service. I have known her many years, and, although I enjoy her confidence in part, she is still an enigma to me. A mother could not be more devoted to her child than is that old woman to Leonora. Her fear lest some misfortune shall happen to her darling amounts almost to a passion with her. I remember once years ago, Mr. Arnstein tried to separate her from the child. What turned him from his purpose I never knew. In fact, I have not been their attending physician

since Mr. Arnstein took charge of his grandchild. Lispeth summoned me when she was in a dilemma just before Mr. Arnstein sailed for Europe. Faithful and true is that strange woman; and I would trust her with anything I hold dear, if once she gave her promise to guard it."

XI.

"Miss Sturmer is of German descent, is she not?" asked Richard.

"Her father was German on the paternal side only. Karl Sturmer's mother was an English woman. The Sturmer family prided themselves on their long lineage and large wealth. I learned much of the history of that family from Leonora's father himself. They were a proud race—very narrow and selfish. Leonora's mother, however, was a daughter of that time honored people, which looks back—back through ages to the very fountain head of their nation in old Abraham."

"Ah, she is a Jewess! That accounts for much that has puzzled me," said Richard.

"Yes, Leonora is Jewish on her mother's side," returned Dr. Brewster. "I knew her well. She was lovely in character, as well as a most beautiful woman."

Her love for her husband was of that kind which is most unselfish—which grows with years. She was entirely free from vanity. I remember once while spending an evening with them Karl Sturmer requested his wife to sing. She complied, and I think I never heard a richer voice—a voice more full of promise than hers. I could not refrain from suggesting, as I took into consideration her marvelous beauty also, that she should cultivate her voice and train for the applause, which she would surely receive from the public. I told her she might have the whole world at her feet. “My husband needs me more than the world,” she replied simply.

“I have had the pleasure of being thrown with many cultured and talented people among the Jews during the past six years,” said Richard. “I have studied into their wondrous history and I am convinced that there must be a purpose in the preservation of this much persecuted, and long suffering people through all these centuries. It is nearly four thous-

and years since God made His covenant with Abram and blessed him. Other nations in the world's history have sprung into existence, multiplied and grown powerful. They have passed away and nothing remains save a few crumbling stones, mute witnesses of bygone glories. Some writer has aptly likened the Hebrew race to the Gulf Stream as flowing on through the Ocean of Time—never lessening—never increasing—never changing. It is said that they number the same to-day as when Moses led them out of the land of the Pharoahs'; and, too, they have ever preserved their identity. Go where you will in any part of the civilized world, you find the Hebrew, mingling with all nationalities, mixing with none, playing his part in the theatre of life, showing himself a credit wherever he enjoys rights in common with other men. Charitable, temperate, industrious, and exemplary in family life—thus do I find the Jew."

Richard paused a moment and Dr. Brewster said in softened tones,—

“It seems as if one could see the hand of God in this strange preservation of the Israelites as a distinct people throughout the changes of the world’s nations in past ages. I believe that after their wanderings are over they will be led by the guidance of that Divine hand to believe in Him, who is really the glory and light of their own race. This is beyond human power, but the God of both Jew and Christian, whose religion the Jew defended and preserved to the world, can, and I believe will, in His own good time, bring the children of Abraham to accept Jesus of Nazereth as the true Son of the Father—as the Messiah, for whose coming they are still watching and waiting.”

There was silence for a few minutes, then Dr. Brewster resumed the conversation by saying,—

“I have often wondered as to what nationality old Lispeth belongs. She is not English, I am sure. I do not think she is German either. It seems to me that I have heard something which has led me to think that she, too, is of Jewish par-

entage, but I am not certain."

"She looks to me like a Russian," said Richard. Perhaps she is a Polish woman. Many Poles made their way to England after the last relic of Polish independence was destroyed in 1785."

"All the more reason then that she should flee from that country after it came under the sway of Russia, if she is a Jewess," said Dr. Brewster. "The Jews have been cruelly treated in Russia. Their lands taken from them, excluded from all trades and not even allowed the rights of citizenship. Is it to be wondered at that they resorted to usury to support life?"

"The same is true of other lands, my dear sir," said the younger man. "For centuries there seemed to be no abiding place for the Hebrew people. Even old England has cause to blush at the atrocities committed upon its subjects of that faith in the massacre of York. It was thought no wrong during the Crusades, when the Jews refused to give up their

gold to carry on the costly enterprise, to extort it from them by acts of barbarous cruelty."

"I know, my boy," replied Dr. Brewster, "but since Western Europe has been lifted to a higher plane of civilization by the light of knowledge, since bigotry and intolerance have fallen back among the shadows of the past—these people have emerged in an incredibly short time from obscurity where prejudice and hatred have pushed them, and have shown that they can do something more than make money. I never listen to the enchanting music of Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream," or the soul-stirring strains of his "Elijah;" I never read Heine's beautiful poems and lyrics without feeling the depth of melody and poetry in the outcast people."

"Yes, the musical genius of the Jew is indeed great," said Richard. "Meyerbeer and Rossini, too, were Jews. Eduard Bendemann with his brush has made for himself a name in the world of Art. His perfect symmetry in drawing

and composition, his tender, harmonious, yet always true coloring have excited universal admiration. It seems to me that whatever they undertake they do thoroughly and well. Consider how they have been gaining ground as lawyers in England since their admission to the bar. The time is not far distant, I believe, when some of its most shining lights will be Jews. I shall be glad to hear of their admission to parliament."

"Yes," assented Dr. Brewster, "that day is coming too, for they are good patriots. It has been said that they drive a hard bargain. In that they do not stand alone, for is there not a class of people in our own country, who have inherited from their forefathers but a few generations back as a result of their narrow, struggling lives, that cunning and closeness in a deal to whom the expression "Jew him down" applies as well, but for which the people of to-day are not to blame? So why use that phrase to express everything small and mean in a bargain. It was only by compulsion

that the Jews became traders and usurers. In their early history we find them following divers pursuits, as fishermen, shepherds, tillers of the soil; we find them plying various trades, as carpenters and the like; in truth, to amass riches was not originally a trait of the Jewish character."

"By no means," said Richard. "It is a question in my mind whether love of gain and closeness in a deal are traits which stand out more prominently with the Jews than with other people. If they do, in consequence of centuries instead of a few generations of constant struggle merely to live, why, give the Jews time and those traits will be pushed into the back-ground — overshadowed by the many talents—the many virtues, which each succeeding generation brings to light. They will be liberal with their wealth in living and letting those around them live. They will use their gold for the good of their fellow men."

"Indeed, the life of Sir Moses Montefiore is a noble example of charity and deeds of kindness. He has not only used

every means to better the condition of the poor and oppressed of his own race, but he has been known to subscribe for various charitable objects without regard to faith."

There was silence for some time—each man busy with his own thoughts. Richard seemed to see again the lovely face of the young Jewess. The sweet tones of her voice lingered in his memory, and he was picturing to himself the pleasure it would be to throw some happiness into that young life when he was brought to himself by Dr. Brewster saying,—

"It is past midnight, my boy; and if we leave by the early boat we must snatch a few hours' sleep."

In a few moments perfect stillness reigned around the great house, which gleamed white in the moonlight, and stood out in bold relief against the dark background of trees.

XII.

When Leonora came down to breakfast the next morning she found a basket of roses on the table, freshly cut and still wet with the morning dew. A note written in a delicate, feminine hand was fastened to the handle. It read thus:—

“Mrs. Leighton sends these roses with her greeting to her young neighbor, and begs that she will come and spend the morning with her ”

“Will not that be delightful, Lispeth?”

“Yes, child, I am sure you will enjoy it.”

After breakfast Leonora arranged her roses in vases and then went to prepare for her morning visit. She came down looking as sweet and fresh as the morning itself. She fastened some roses in her belt, tied on a broad brimmed hat, and, taking up the empty basket, started down the path. She had gone but a few steps when she returned and said to Lispeth, who was standing on the porch:—

“Did you observe, Lispeth, that Dr. Brewster introduced me as Miss Sturmer, and Mrs. Leighton addressed her note in the same way?”

“Yes, for Dr. Brewster remembers your father and mother. He knows you only by that name.”

“It is just as well. I shall always be called Leonora Sturmer now. Goodbye till noon, Lispeth.”

Mrs. Leighton was sitting in a large easy chair, which had been wheeled out upon the porch in order that she might enjoy the fresh morning air. She saw Leonora coming up the broad avenue leading to the house, and thought how lovely she looked with the pink roses at her belt and the same faint color tinting her cheeks. The young girl felt shy at first; but the cordial greeting of the gentle sweet-faced lady, her kind and almost tender manner, soon drove away all shyness.

“It is very kind of you to come, dear. My morning would be very lonely. My son has gone to the city with Dr. Brews-

ter and will not return until to-morrow evening."

"I know what it is to feel lonely, for I am often so," said Leonora.

"Ah, I was never lonely at your age when I was young and strong. I had so much to fill my life; but all is changed now," said Mrs. Leighton with a sigh. "I have only my son who has already given six years out of his young life in trying to make me feel my loneliness less. He is only thirty now, although he looks somewhat older, I think."

"You have been in Europe some years, I believe," said Leonora.

"Yes, and we remained longer than we intended, going about from one climate to another, according to the season, in search of the health which I fear never will be mine. Finally we turned our faces towards our native land, and are so happy to be once more in our old home. The first few days were very sad ones for me as every nook and corner are associated with the dear ones I have lost—my husband and my daughter."

Leonora saw that Mrs. Leighton liked to talk of those other days—of the husband who had idolized her, and the daughter who had been the very light of her life. She encouraged her to go on with gentle words of sympathy.

“When I saw you coming up the path,” continued Mrs. Leighton, “a vision of Laura came before my eyes. She was about your age, I should judge. Her height and figure, too, were much like yours, but there the resemblance ceases and the vision was quickly dispelled. She was fair—very fair. Her hair was golden and her eyes were blue.”

The morning hours slipped quickly by and before Leonora arose to take leave of her hostess, there had been laid the foundation of a friendship between them which was to prove life long. It was much to this young girl, who counted no woman friend save her faithful Lispeth, and whose heart craved the tender sympathy of true friendship.

On the afternoon of the same day the sky became suddenly overcast. There

were flashes of lightning, followed by terrific claps of thunder, and before long the rain came down in torrents. Although the fury of the storm abated somewhat, it continued showery until night closed in, and Mrs. Leighton saw no more of her young neighbor that day. After tea the following evening, she was reclining on a low couch in the room on the first floor of the north wing. The casements were wide open, and her couch had been drawn near the window. It was too cool after the rain for her to sit outside. Leonora saw her as she was coming along the carriage drive, having entered the grounds in the same way as on the first day of her visit to the deserted house—through a broken place in the fence at the extreme end of the small garden belonging to Mountain Villa. The young girl ascended the steps, passed lightly along the piazza, and peeped in, saying:—

“May I come in, please? The day has seemed very long, and I have wanted to come over so much that I could wait no longer.”

"Certainly, my dear. I have been hoping you would come. My son has not returned, and I am so disappointed. I presume something has happened to detain him."

"Perhaps the boat is late to-night," suggested Leonora.

"I think not. The stage has just passed. I must accustom myself to doing without my son more now, as he is preparing to enter upon the duties of his profession in the autumn. He believes that a physician is called to his work just as much as a clergyman, and feels that he must do something for the good of his fellow men. Richard is of too active a temperament, and has too high a sense of man's duty towards man to be content with a life of ease, when there are so many whose sufferings he may be able to alleviate, if not heal. We will keep our home here always and occupy it through the summer. My son will spend as much of his time at "The Manor" in the years to come as he can spare; but he wishes to make a home for himself in the city also.

He is more fortunate than most young men in his profession in having means ample enough to permit him to work among God's poor in a city of many nationalities and creeds. From the rich and those in comfortable circumstances he will take pay; but from the poor—nothing."

"That will be an ideal life," said Leonora whose sympathy had ever gone out towards the poor.

"Dr. Brewster has asked my son to become his partner, as he is much overworked and no longer young. Richard told him he would take his poor, but, there are so many other young physicians who need a lucrative practice to enable them to live and support a family perhaps, that he advised Dr. Brewster to take such an assistant."

They talked on for some time longer. Leonora told her new friend much concerning herself, and found a sympathetic listener, interested in the simplest detail connected with a life so strange for a young girl.

"How beautiful is the twilight hour," said Mrs. Leighton. "It is then that I miss my daughter most. She loved it; and used to sit and sing softly to herself, with her hands lying idly in her lap. I can sometimes hear her voice again, when I am alone at the twilight hour."

"I will sing for you now if you wish," said Leonora gently.

"O, will you? How kind you are. I did not know you possessed that gift."

"I sing a little for my own pleasure. My German governess taught me some simple ballads, and I have always loved them."

Soon a fresh young voice broke the stillness of that twilight hour—a pure soprano voice of no great compass, but rich, and mellow, and full of feeling. When the last sweet note died away Mrs. Leighton said:—

"I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed it. Will you think me selfish if I ask you to sing again?"

"Not at all. I am glad if it gives you pleasure," replied Leonora.

She sang another simple German ballad with peculiar pathos and then emboldened by the evident appreciation of her listener she broke into a favorite song of hers, Handel's "Angels Ever Bright and Fair." She sang it with a voice so full of the spirit of the song that one might almost fancy one could hear the gentle rustle of soft white wings in the stillness which followed.

Leonora's audience numbered more than she thought. During her first song Dr. Leighton alighted from a carriage at the gate and came quickly up the avenue. At the sound of her voice he walked upon the grass in order to muffle his footsteps. He stepped upon the porch unheard, and stood leaning against one of the pillars. The silence which followed the last song remained unbroken; still Richard lingered hoping to hear more. Finally he passed through the hall to the door of the room where he hoped to find his mother and her fair visitor. He looked in and could discern in the gloom only the figure of his mother lying on the couch. The

young songstress had fled, and when he said "Mother" very softly he received no reply. He knew that she had dropped asleep, so he seated himself in a large arm-chair by the window, and was soon absorbed in thought.

Mrs. Leighton's nap was short. She seemed to feel the presence of her son for he was roused from his reverie by her voice, saying plaintively:

"Richard."

"Yes, Mother, I am here."

"O, my son. I have had such a beautiful dream. It seemed as if the whole room were flooded with light and in the midst was an angel clothed in robes of snowy white. She looked like our Laura with shining golden hair and the same sweet smile; but she had the dark lustrous eyes and the voice of our young neighbor."

"No doubt you were thinking of Laura, Mother. The spell of the twilight hour, the sweet voice and the subject of the song—all combined to carry you away to the land of "Angels Ever Bright and

Fair" when you dropped for a few minutes into the "Arms of Morpheus."

"I had given you up for to-night, Richard. When did you arrive?"

"Some time since. I did not feel equal to the jolting I was sure to get in that old coach; so hired a young man to bring me here in a more comfortable conveyance."

XIII.

The days which followed Leonora's first visit to Mrs. Leighton were as one long dream of happiness. A new life seemed to open for her—a life with people of liberal minds and tastes congenial to her own. The broken place in the fence had not been mended, in truth, it had been made larger; and, as the grounds were easier of access through it than by way of the front gate, Leonora slipped in and out whenever it suited her fancy. She would roam about at her own sweet will—free as a bird and just as happy. As she gained in health and strength much of that delicate, almost ethereal look disappeared, and she seemed to blossom into richer beauty day by day.

Mrs. Leighton's heart was completely won by Leonora's gentle, sympathetic manner and sweet voice. As the days went by she became a constant source of

comfort to the semi-invalid, whose life was more or less lonely, and whose condition made her at times very sensitive to harsh sounds or rough manners. Mrs. Hargate, a middle-aged woman, who attended to the household affairs and waited upon Mrs. Leighton, was a kind hearted woman and very competent, but uneducated and hence not in the least congenial to her mistress.

Leonora usually spent the morning hours at "The Manor" reading aloud or working at some dainty piece of embroidery. But they were seldom alone for Richard usually left his study to join them for an hour at least. Leonora grew to expect him, trying not to show her pleasure at his coming, but failing utterly, for she had not yet learned to hide her feelings. Her changing face was but the index to her thoughts within. Sometimes Richard would take up a book and read to them, while Leonora worked, and Mrs. Leighton reclined in her easy chair with eyes half closed. Often they would drop into easy conversation. It was then that

Leonora revealed to Richard more and more her purity and refinement of mind. And it was during those hours, too, that she gained an insight into a truly Christian home, whose inmates brought their religion into their daily lives—a religion which teaches love, charity and faith in Him who came to save mankind, that faith so beautiful in its purity and simplicity.

All this was not without its influence upon Leonora. She knew it to have been her father's religion, and she learned to revere the memory of the parent she had never known, because of his self-sacrificing love for the Jewish maiden whom he had made his wife. Had he not given up all for her save his religion—position, kindred, money, home? Religious subjects, however, were never discussed between the friends. They respected each other's belief, and they never allowed the difference in their religion to form a barrier between them. Once only did Leonora have occasion to bring that fact before them. It came about in this way.

She did not make her appearance at "The Manor" one Saturday after she had become a daily visitor there. Mrs. Leighton had seen nothing of her since the morning before. But towards evening the young girl came tripping over the lawn singing softly. She joined her friends on the piazza, settled herself on a low stool at Mrs. Leighton's feet and tossed her hat aside.

"I have missed my little friend so much," said Mrs. Leighton, stroking her soft brown hair. "Where has she been keeping herself since yesterday?"

"This is our day of rest and worship—our Sabbath," replied the young girl simply.

Although Leonora never spoke of her own faith—of the rights and ceremonials of the Jewish religion, Mrs. Leighton and her son both recognized that hers was a deeply religious temperament. She showed in many ways her reverence of the Almighty Father and saw the manifestation of a Divine hand in all the works

of nature, from the simplest flower to the most beautiful landscape.

In the early part of the afternoon of those long summer days Mrs. Leighton rested, but towards five o'clock she usually went with Richard for a drive. They always stopped for Leonora, and the three would go bowling along through some of the most picturesque parts of the Highlands. Those drives were Leonora's greatest pleasure. The ever changing scenery of that region famed for its beauty proved a continual feast for her eyes.

They were a happy trio. Mrs. Leighton, because now in the presence of the young girl she felt the loss of her own lovely daughter less after all these years of grieving for her. Leonora, because of these new friends who had brought so much brightness into her life, and who were always so thoughtful of her in every way. And Richard, because of the spell which this gentle girl had unconsciously woven around him. He did not analyze his own feelings in the early days of their

acquaintance. He knew only that there was something about her which touched a chord in his nature hitherto unknown to him. He had always believed that his profession would suffice to fill his life, when once he could give his time to it. A devoted son to his mother, ever courteous to one of her sex, and a friend to womankind in general, he had never thought to form closer ties. It had been his good fortune to meet some of the noblest types of womanhood, yet he never pictured one as sitting by his own fireside, because the one had never crossed his path whom he cared to place there.

And so the summer months glided by. Before they were aware of it they knew that in one short month more they must separate. Mr. Arnstein was expected home about October first and then Leonora and Lispeth must turn their faces homeward. Lispeth knew they would not be allowed to linger even for a day after his return. It came to Richard then with full force what this separation meant to him—how essential to his happiness

the young girl had become. Life to him now without her would be dreary enough. She had stolen into his heart and he must keep her there, for he could not live without her.

One lovely morning early in September Mrs. Leighton and Leonora strolled into the little summer-house, where Richard had first surprised his young neighbor that day early in June. Mrs. Leighton had been feeling much better of late and had taken to walking about the grounds a little each day. Richard came in search of them, carrying a basket of early fruit, and followed by Mrs. Hargate, who had prepared a collation of delicious lemonade and cake. Then Mrs. Leighton left them to inspect some purchases for the house, made by Mrs. Hargate, who had that morning returned from the city where she had been spending a day or two.

The two young people were left alone. Richard laughingly referred to that day when he first met Leonora, as people sometimes will after they have learned to know each other better. He confessed to

having seen Lispeth and Leonora from the upper window of the north wing sitting on the rustic seat, seemingly perfectly at home—the one knitting, the other reading aloud. He told her also that he had descended to the grounds, loitering about with the idea of speaking to them, and bidding them welcome should chance so favor him.

“You remember, Miss Leonora,” continued Richard, “how chance seemed to direct your foot-steps to the very spot where I was waiting—to this little summer-house. I gathered the roses for you then and bade you welcome. I would gather for you always the roses that grow in the pathway of life, stripping away as many of the thorns as shall lie in my power. I would welcome you to my home and keep you there as the light and joy of my life.”

Then Richard poured out his love for the young girl whose sweet face became radiant with happiness as she listened to his impassioned words, but its expression changed ere he finished. Pale and trem-

bling she arose and motioned for him to cease.

“Ah! do not speak to me thus. Indeed, it cannot be. Do you not know this must not be? I am”—

Leonora paused an instant and Richard spoke the word she would have uttered—

“A Jewess?”

“Yes, a Jewess, and reared in the faith of the Jewish people,” replied the young girl, shrinking away from him and covering her face with her hands.

“I know all that you would say, Leonora,” said Richard gently. He drew her to a seat beside him. “There is one question I would ask of you. Do you love me, dear one?”

For answer Leonora withdrew her hands, and Richard read the speaking face aright. He saw written there the deep love she bore him. “Yes, I love you, Richard,” she said softly; and the color came back, mounting to her forehead and even tinting the dainty shell like ear, which was all Richard could see as

she turned her blushing face from him. He lifted her hands to his lips and imprinted a kiss upon it, then held it tightly in both of his own while he spoke:—

“I wish you to know, best beloved, that, notwithstanding my great love for you, I have not been without my moments of reflection. I do not offer you the love of an impetuous boy, full of youthful fancies, who thinks only of the present. I have seen much of the world, and am older for my years than most men. I know what a union of two of such different faith brings as a rule—discord and then unhappiness. But there have been exceptions to that rule and there can be again. In the case of your own parents”—

Leonora interrupted him by an exclamation of surprise. She turned quickly and looked at him earnestly, but before she could speak Richard said:—

“Ah, yes. I know the story of their love and marriage. A friend of yours and mine has told me all. Believe me when I say that my love for you is none

the less deep, and will prove all the more lasting even if I have stopped to reflect on these things. It has not been a question with me as to whether the woman I love will make me happy, but on the contrary as to whether I can make her happy. Be my wife, Leonora, and your happiness will ever be my first thought. Indeed, I cannot do without you now. Be a daughter to my mother, who already loves you as such, and who will receive you with open arms. She has none of that narrowness of soul which believes that a marriage can be a happy one only as it conforms to certain customs of society."

"It was my mother's wish that I should be brought up in the Jewish faith, and my father, although he was a Christian, would have carried out that wish, but he lived only one year after her death. My grandfather has taken care that I should grow up in ignorance of the fact that one of my parents was a Christian. It was only last June that I learned the truth. My mother expressed a desire that when I should become old enough to judge for

myself I should be permitted to read and study without restriction the religion which my father loved, and to which he always adhered. You love me, Richard, and would make me your wife, even if I should never give up my faith?"

"O, so gladly, dearest. We will study together the wonderful truths in the Word of God. I think that you will come in time to believe in, and accept, as your religion, that which was your father's, and which is mine also; if not, well, trust me, little one—trust your future happiness into my hands and you will never regret it."

And so they plighted their troth; then Richard led the young girl into the presence of Mrs. Leighton and said proudly:—

"Mother, I have brought you a daughter."

Mrs. Leighton folded Leonora in her arms, kissed her lovingly and said in tones so full of tenderness:—

"This is what I have longed for. You have made me very happy, my children."

XIV.

The fifteenth day of September, 1849, found Enos Arnstein once more in his home in New York, having arrived in port that morning, accompanied by his nephew, Leon Arnstein. Towards evening of the same day he was sitting on the vine-covered porch, which extended along the rear of the house. It had been unusually warm and sultry all day, and even after the sun had set there was hardly a breath of air stirring. Mosquitoes were troublesome, and he was smoking leisurely to keep them at a distance. He was in a most amiable mood, for he believed that he would soon see one of his most cherished plans perfected—that of uniting his grand-child in marriage with his nephew. He believed, too, that it was only a question of time when the casket with its precious contents would be found through his perseverance in tracing the mate to the silken mitt. He

considered himself nearer the object of his search since he had succeeded in ascertaining where Marie Rabowski lived in England after leaving the Sturmer family. He had paid a visit to the cottage and learned through an old man, who had lived next door for many years, that a woman of the same name, answering to her description, had purchased the cottage some twenty-odd years ago, and had taken up her abode in it, giving the impression that she intended ending her days there. She remained but a few months, however, and then disappeared. The house had been rented on a long lease to one family until about six months before, then it was sold. Its purchaser was a retired naval officer, who enjoyed a comfortable income. He had gone for a tour on the continent, and was not expected home for some months.

Mr. Arnstein hoped to learn from this man the name of the person through whom the sale was made, and hence trace the whereabouts of Marie Rabowski. He felt that to remain in London, and await

the return of the owner of the cottage would be valuable time lost; so, after attending to all other business, he turned his face homeward with the determination to hasten the marriage of these young people. He would then be free to return to England, and continue his search for the woman to whom was known, he felt quite sure, the hiding place of the precious casket.

This man's mind was full of the one great scheme of his life as he sat musing there alone. Spread upon a large table in the centre of his own private room was a map of the County of New York. If one could have looked over his shoulder, during the hours he was wont to study it so intently, one would see that there were small plots of ground marked out by red lines. These indicated the location of lots owned by himself in the small villages north of New York, which have since been swallowed up by the great city. On most of these lots were frame buildings, the rental of which sufficed to pay the taxes. But the red lines were

few in number, and the parcels of land bounded by them small in extent as compared with the blue lines, which marked out large tracts of land lying between these villages, that he hoped some day to get into his possession, or rather into the possession of his two only relatives by means of the casket, which contained Leonora's inheritance; and through the wealth which had come to Leon Arnstein from his parents.

Mr. Arnstein had spent much time in tracing out these pieces of ground, learning the names of their owners, and the possibility of their willingness to sell. As he sat blowing rings of smoke into the still air, watching them slowly enlarge one by one, and intermingle with their predecessors, forming a thick cloud before him, he dreamed dreams of the future growth and prosperity of the city, which would enrich the descendants of his family, and, as he had said to Lispeth years before, make the name of Arnstein a power in the next generation. Could he, by a wonderful foresight, penetrate

those clouds of smoke and see far into the future? His desire to gain possession of so much land lying in and between those villages would seem to indicate that he could see in part that which has really taken place, but which at that time would have dazzled the eyes of the most sanguine—whole villages blotted out, and long tracts of open country, rocky and barren in many places, now covered with great piles of masonry built for all purposes—galleries of Art and Music, large business houses, yes, and even used as homes by thousands, as in case of the large apartment houses, towering heavenward many stories high. Where once were squatters' shanties, and where the goat roamed at will, are streets lined with palatial homes, here and there a grand church, synagogue, college or institution of some sort—every foot of land utilized and many times more valuable even than Enos Arnstein imagined it would be forty-odd years ago. Yet something of all this he seemed to see, and he felt confident of the success of his

schemes. He was suddenly interrupted in his reverie, and brought back to the present by the appearance of a young man in the doorway, and a cheery voice saying,—

“Well, Uncle Enos, you have found as cool a place as there is anywhere. The atmosphere is so oppressive. I believe it forebodes a storm.”

“No doubt,” replied Mr. Arnstein. “It is unusually warm for September, and these infernal mosquitoes are enough to drive one mad. Have a cigar, Leon, and help yourself to a seat.”

“Thanks, Uncle. I believe I will.”

The young man drew out a chair which stood just inside the hall, and was soon comfortably seated.

Richard Leighton would not have compared favorably with Leon Arnstein so far as physical beauty was concerned. There could be no mistaking the race to which the latter belonged for he bore the marks, which distinguish the Jewish people in whatever clime they may be found. He was a representative of the noblest

type of that people. The world has seen many such notwithstanding the adverse circumstances under which they have labored for many centuries of Christian intolerance. And the world is destined to see many more. It is only a question of time, which is slowly but surely righting all things.

"I presume my fair cousin will be with us to-morrow at this hour," said Leon.

"Yes, earlier than this," replied his uncle. "You will then see for yourself that she is all I have represented—lovely, accomplished, and amiable."

"I do not doubt it, Uncle. But does Leonora know aught of this plan for her future?"

"No, I deemed it best that she should be kept in ignorance of it yet a little while; at least until she has met you. But I must see this marriage consummated before many weeks as I cannot tarry here. I have business in England which requires my attention. I do not see what more you can desire in a wife or she in a

husband. You are exactly suited to each other in every respect."

"Possibly," replied the young man. "Still, there may be wanting the one important requirement for a happy marriage—love. I would never contract a loveless marriage myself. Neither would I ask the hand of a woman if she could not give her heart also. I had before me an example of such a marriage in the case of my own parents. From my earliest boyhood I knew that my father's heart lay buried in the grave of his first wife. He had not one grain of affection for my mother, and was too true a man to affect what he did not feel. No more could I. My father was kind to my mother always, but she missed that which was essential to her loving nature, and I fully believe it saddened her life. Her marriage was arranged by her parents for convenience sake, which united wealth to wealth, a custom which prevails among our people. There may have been good reasons for such a custom in days gone by, and in countries where their wealth

was the only safe-guard of the Jews. They recognized in common with the rest of the world that money is power. Even great rulers have been glad to avail themselves of the gold of their Jewish subjects in times of financial distress, only to forget all obligations when afterwards appealed to in behalf of those subjects at indignities heaped upon them. However, those days have gone by and the old customs are fast dying out. Since you have set your heart upon this marriage, Uncle Enos, I hope things will turn out as you desire. I am glad my cousin knows nothing of all this, and I must request you to give me time in which to gain her affection. I wish you would promise me not to make known the object of my visit here. It might have the effect of turning her against me at the outset. In any case it may prove that we can never entertain for each other anything more than a cousinly regard. If so, I intend returning to London to continue my studies for admission to the bar. I like England and my interests

are all there. I know there is a wide field here under this free government. If I marry my cousin Leonora and make my home in New York, no doubt I will become thoroughly Americanized, and as interested in this city as you seem to be; but for the present I am willing to wait—to drift awhile. I am quite a believer in that power called destiny, which presides over human life. I do not mean that I would sit idly and let events shape the whole course of my life with no effort on my part at moulding of character or carving a name among men. But I say there are certain things which cannot be forced, and perhaps the most important of these is love. There is truth in the words of the poet who said:—

‘Love is not in our power,
Nay, what seems stranger is not in our choice;
We only love where fate ordains we should,
And, blindly fond, oft slight superior merit.’”

While Leon was speaking it came upon Mr. Arnstein with full force that here was a young man whom he could not bend to his will, who possessed an independence of thought and character against which

it would be no easy matter to contend, who was of age and in full possession of his fortune, and who had what he considered absurd ideas concerning marriage. He was forced to acknowledge to himself that he must now respect the views of another concerning that attribute of the human mind and heart against which he had scoffed all his life. Whether or not he believed in it himself as a promoter of happiness, he saw it would prove in this instance the only medium through which his plans could be brought to perfection. However docile and submissive to his wishes Leonora might be, there was another side to the question of which he had not thought—the possibility of his nephew refusing to take an unwilling bride. “Unless she can give me her whole heart, Uncle, there can be no such thing as a marriage between us;” Leon had said later on. There was no other way than for Mr. Arnstein to comply with his request—give him time to win his bride, keeping silence the while.

Leon could not see in the gloom of the fading day the dark frown on his uncle's brow. Neither could he know the thoughts which filled the mind of this man of indomitable will and fierce temper. He had seen his uncle but once before in all his life, and then only during a short visit which Mr. Arnstein had made to his home about six years before. He had heard of the marriage of Leonora's mother to a Christian, but knew none of the particulars of that marriage. He was entirely ignorant of the casket so diligently sought for by his uncle, which contained his young cousin's inheritance. He did not suspect that there was a strong motive underlying Mr. Arnstein's most urbane manner towards him—that the seeming deep concern in his affairs was only a matter of self interest.

The two men remained outside some time longer talking on indifferent subjects. Finally Leon withdrew, saying he must write some letters before retiring. After he had gone Mr. Arnstein pondered long over his nephew's words,

and before going to rest he had fully persuaded himself that all would turn out as he desired, notwithstanding the fact that he could not take the reins in his own hands and drive these two young people into marriage. "The wish is often father to the thought," and so it was with Mr. Arnstein. He believed everything to be in favor of a happy result, so he resolved to summon all the patience he possessed to his aid and wait, lest by undue haste he spoil all.

XV.

It was with a heavy heart and tearful eye that Leonora seated herself in the carriage, which was to convey her from the boat to her home in New York. She shrank as far back into the corner as she could, and drew a thick traveling veil over her face lest Mr. Arnstein, who had come to meet them, should detect the tears which would gather in her eyes, or notice what was impossible for her to conceal—her utter dejection at this home coming. It had all been so sudden—the unexpected summons which Lispeth dared not disregard, the hasty packing, and the parting from those who had become so dear to her. She felt as though she had left all that was best and brightest in her life behind her to return once more to that home, which had ever seemed a prison to her.

Mr. Arnstein greeted her with more warmth than ever before, his manner was

kind and his tones almost gentle; yet all that passed unnoticed by the young girl whose thoughts were far away. She seemed to see the beautiful Highlands still, and the pretty white cottage where she had passed the happiest days of her life. The soothing, gentle tones of Mrs. Leighton, as she bade farewell to the sorrowful girl, sounded in her ears once more. But saddest of all had been the parting from him who was all the world to her. "Only a little while, dearest, and I shall come to claim you," Richard had whispered, but the words did not seem to give much consolation to Leonora, whose greatest fear was that her grandfather would never give his consent to her marriage, for was she not following in the footsteps of her mother in giving her love to a Christian? Nearly three years must elapse before she would be of age and free to act for herself. "So much can happen in the meantime," she had said to Lispeth in mournful tones, when the good woman tried to comfort her as the boat bore them away—back to the

old life, so thought Leonora with a sinking heart.

"Your grandfather may not give his consent to your marriage, dearie; but you can wait until his guardianship ends, if he will give you a home until then; if not, you will find that you have kind friends to protect you. However, we will wait and see," said Lispeth complacently. "He is entitled to your confidence when you choose to give it to him, and it is right that you should ask his permission to marry Dr. Leighton. More than that he cannot expect of you."

Mr. Arnstein's manner towards the young girl was not lost on Lispeth. She knew what it all meant—he believed that he was bringing Leonora home to make her the wife of his nephew. The old woman sat grim and silent throughout the drive, stealing an occasional glance at her master, who was sitting just opposite. She thought, if Leon Arnstein were really an inmate of his uncle's home, it might mean freedom from study, and a change in the monotonous routine of the old life

for her young charge; and the thought gave her much comfort.

The carriage stopped before the door. Mr. Arnstein alighted first. Lispeth took the opportunity to whisper to the young girl:—

“Cheer up, little one, life in the old home may be brighter than you anticipate.”

During the drive, Leonora could not shake off the feeling of depression which came over her when she first stepped on shore. She ascended the steps slowly as one in a dream, but hardly had she crossed the threshold when she was suddenly brought to herself at the sound of a fresh, manly voice in that quiet house—one of those voices good to hear, which always cheers and uplifts the desponding.

“Well Uncle,” it said, “you have returned at last. I have been waiting and somewhat impatiently too, I fear.”

“The boat was late, my boy. Leonora, this is your cousin Leon, who is making his first visit to America. Give him your greeting.”

Leonora threw back her veil and Leon beheld the sweet face of the young girl whom he had crossed the water to meet, possibly to make his wife, if fate should so decree. Leonora drew back in surprise and her face wore a startled expression, but it changed instantly as she encountered the frank, kindly look in the handsome eyes of her cousin, felt the pressure of his hand for an instant, and heard the same cheery tones addressing her:—

“This is the little cousin I have wanted so long to know. My only kinswoman, too. We must be friends at once. Do you not think so, cousin mine?”

“I do indeed,” replied Leonora with a smile which was her chief charm. Her face in repose was almost too thoughtful for one so young, but her smile lighted up the whole face, and so changed its expression as to quite startle the beholder.

When Leonora found herself in her room alone with Lispeth, she said eagerly:—

“O, Lispeth, tell me, is this the cousin

in whose father's house my mother passed her childhood?"

"Yes, dearie, but he is the child of your Uncle Reuben's second wife. He was your great uncle of course. If you remember I told you that he married again. It was just after your mother went to live in Berlin with her father. This young man is your second cousin."

"Ah! I remember now," replied Leonora. She sat silent for some time, busy with her own thoughts; finally she said:—"I am so glad Cousin Leon is here, Lisbeth."

It was with a much lighter heart that Leonora obeyed the summons to dinner about two hours later. She wore a dress of soft white material relieved by ribbons of pale pink. A delicate flush was on her cheek, and her dark eyes shone with the lustre of perfect health. Mr. Arnstein himself felt the charm of her exquisite beauty, and he was satisfied with what those months in the country had done for her. However, there was something about his grandchild which puzzled him.

He missed the shy dreamy girl whom he had always known. There was a certain quiet dignity about her, and she seemed to have acquired an ease of manner and a confidence in herself for which he was not prepared. When Leonora first entered the drawing-room, where Mr. Arnstein and her cousin awaited her before going to dinner, she addressed him whom she had been taught to call father as grandfather. Mr. Arnstein started as if suddenly stung, and before he could speak, Leonora said simply:—

“Lispeth yielded to my entreaty to tell me about my mother. Of course she could not do so without revealing my true relationship to you. I wish to be called by my own name now, please grandfather.”

The suavity of her grandfather's manner towards her in Leon's presence gave way to sudden anger, and the fierce expression, with which Leonora was only too familiar, shone in his dark eyes. She turned quickly and walked over to her cousin who was standing by the window

looking out. Mr. Arnstein did not trust himself to speak, but hastened to the dining-room where dinner was awaiting them.

Leon heard Leonora's words, but did not see the anger in his uncle's eyes; yet he felt that there was something unusual in all this. It had never occurred to him that his cousin had been kept in ignorance of her true name, and of her relationship to Mr. Arnstein. His tones were full of sympathy when he spoke to the lonely, motherless girl—for he seemed to know intuitively that her life had been a lonely one. His eyes smiled so kindly upon her that Leonora was drawn towards him at once, and when they went into the dining-room together they were chatting pleasantly. Even Mr. Arnstein's dark, forbidding expression seemed not to affect them. As the meal progressed, however, his displeasure gave place to surprise at the change in his grandchild. Although the great improvement which renewed health had made in Leonora's appearance delighted him, her altered

manner filled him with a vague fear which he could not have defined. When they returned to the drawing-room he found himself studying her with an interest he had never felt before. Possibly because he had always looked upon her as a young creature whom he had trained from infancy to obey without question his slightest behest. He had thought of her less as an individual with mind and will and tastes of her own, than as a means towards the achievement of a great end.

Leonora showed her grandfather all the deference due him as a parent. She was gentle and even affectionate in her manner, since, for the first time in his life, he chose to relax his habitual severity towards her. But he saw that the young girl no longer stood in awe of him—the old submissive demeanor, and the quick lowering of the eyelids when he addressed her as in those other days, were gone. Once or twice when she felt her grandfather's eyes riveted upon her in earnest scrutiny, she met his glance so carelessly and fearlessly that he was at a loss to ac-

count for all this. He asked himself the question—how much does she know concerning her parents? He determined to find out all that Lispeth had told her before the close of another day.

Mr. Arnstein's vague fears, lest his long cherished plan regarding these two young people should fail, were banished, however, when he saw how soon they became interested in each other, and how congenial were their tastes. Before the trio separated for the night he was quite confident of his success, and especially so when he heard Leonora say to Lispeth on entering her room:—

“O, Lispeth dear, I do like Cousin Leon so much. And is he not handsome? I think”—

Mr. Arnstein heard no more for the door suddenly closed. It was enough to cause him to lie awake a long time, wondering how soon he could manage to bring this marriage about, in order that he might depart on his journey in search of the precious casket.

As the days went by Mr. Arnstein had

every reason to believe the wish of his heart would be gratified, for he judged by outward appearances. Knowing so little of young people he did not consider that it was the exception and not the rule when they failed to find pleasure in each other's society. The best of good feeling had been at once established between the cousins, and there was hardly an hour of the day that they were not together. Leon was always planning some pleasure which Leonora could share, and she grew to think of him as the most delightful of cousins. The young girl marveled much concerning the change in her grandfather's manner towards her, and the freedom she enjoyed. The old days seemed far away, so much had come into her life since she sat with Lispeth in St. John's Park that day in early spring when, weary in body and mind she longed for—she knew not what.

One evening when Leonora had been at home about two weeks, she was sitting at the piano playing for her cousin, who was lolling back in an easy chair listening

to the music and thinking over something which puzzled him. Leonora seemed to be very happy with Leon, and they had merry times together; still her frank, cousinly manner did not satisfy him, and he was conscious of a certain line beyond which he could not venture with her—there was an indefinable something about her, which forbade even the slightest attempt at affectionate demonstration. Leon noticed, too, that Leonora occasionally had moments of abstraction—her thoughts were then far away, and she would even forget her cousin's presence. Is it possible, thought he, that someone has won her heart—that she already loves? The thought was hardly formed ere he banished it, for he could not bear to think of her as belonging to another. She had become very dear to him, although he knew she was perfectly unconscious of his entertaining for her a feeling, which was fast ripening into love. The last sweet notes of Schumann's "Traumeri" died softly away, and Leonora sat silent for a few moments, her

hands resting idly on the keys, but making no sound.

"Cousin mine," said Leon gently, "tell me if I was right in thinking that you were most unhappy on the day of your return. I cannot forget the dejected little figure I saw alight from the carriage, and the tear-stained face which looked at me when the friendly veil was lifted."

"You are right, Cousin Leon; but I did not know then that I should find here one who would do so much to make me happy. I believed that my homecoming meant a return to the lonely life I had always known."

"Were those months in the country such happy ones?" asked Leon.

"Ah, you cannot know what those months have been to me. I seemed merely to have existed before. I have begun to live since then. It matters not what joys may be mine in the years to come, I shall never again know such exquisite happiness as has come into my life during the summer which has passed, simply because the first taste of freedom

is the sweetest. I left the narrow groove in which I had toiled for many years—yes toiled, for the tasks put upon me were very arduous, and often too great for my strength. The pleasures and diversions of other girls were never mine. I had masters and governesses to be sure; but mother, sister or young friends, I have never known. Do you wonder that I began to droop at last, and”—

Mr. Arnstein entered just then followed by a servant with lights. He felt that he had interrupted a *tete-a-tete* in the fading lights, and groaned inwardly at his stupidity, thinking he might have been the cause of delaying still longer what he so earnestly hoped for. His first thought on rising in the morning was always—will to-day see them betrothed? The days seemed fairly to drag along while he waited; and he dared not show his impatience. He knew it would be of no use, for Leon, at least, was not to be hurried. Mr. Arnstein withdrew shortly, leaving the young people alone once more.

Leon wondered much as to the exact

cause and nature of the “exquisite happiness” to which Leonora referred. After the door had closed upon Mr. Arnstein he hoped that the subject would be renewed—that the young girl would open her whole heart to him, but he was disappointed. Leonora did not seem to be inclined to talk of herself again that evening.

XVI.

St. John's Park once again. The same grand old tree in the northeast corner, and beneath it the same bench to which the reader has been conducted twice before. The occupants this time were Leonora and her cousin Leon. They had strolled into this little Park one Sunday morning when Leonora had been home about a month.

It was one of those glorious days in October, which often follows a sudden frost. The air was clear and pure. The trees in their autumn robes formed a canopy of rich coloring above them. Spread out at their feet was a carpet of Nature's own handiwork—patches of grass still green were visible here and there, making a ground-work for the beautiful shades of russet, gold, and red borrowed from the wealth and beauty above. A Sabbath calm pervaded over all. There were few loiterers within the

park and few passers-by in the street without, as service had already begun in St. John's church. The rich, deep tones of the organ reached the two young people, sitting there in silence, for the Sabbath hush seemed to affect them also.

Leonora was thinking of Richard, and of the time scarcely a month hence when he would come and formally ask her grandfather's consent to their marriage. She longed for that day, yet at times she was filled with misgivings. She feared her grandfather's anger, and was quite sure he would carry out his intention of taking her abroad, as he had spoken several times of returning to England in the near future.

The young girl's thoughtful manner was not lost on Leon. He had felt for several days past that his surmise two weeks ago was true as to the possibility of his cousin having already given her love to another. He wished to know the truth notwithstanding the pain it would give him. He foresaw trouble for his cousin, knowing how much his uncle had

set his heart on a marriage for her of his own planning. He hoped to find himself mistaken, but, if not, he must soon go away, for every day would only make his own pain greater—his own disappointment more bitter. He desired to win her confidence, and was wondering how best to introduce the subject, when Leonora herself broke the silence with a question which startled him,—

“Cousin Leon, do you know what it is to love someone very dearly?” She spoke as if half soliloquizing, and before the young man could frame an answer to her question she continued, “I do not mean as one would love a parent, a sister or a brother, but in quite a different way. O, I do not think I can make you understand just what it is to care for someone so much that you would give up all you hold most dear to pass your life by the side of that one.”

“Ah, I do understand, Cousin Leonora, for I too love like that.”

“Then you are betrothed, also. Tell

me all about it, will you Cousin?" said Leonora eagerly.

"I have not said I am betrothed, Cousin mine."

"Well, you will be some day, I am sure. Perhaps you have not asked the one you love for her love in return."

"No, I have not asked her."

"Do not defer it long, dear Cousin, for you are missing much," said Leonora gently. She did not look at him else she would have seen in the drawn expression of the young man's face something of what he suffered, in spite of his effort to conceal it. Although not wholly unprepared for what Leonora had just told him, he had not fully realized until now what it meant for him. The brightness seemed suddenly to have gone out of his life, and the words he would fain have spoken to his little cousin in her happiness, came not at his bidding. There was silence for a few moments while Leonora sat looking dreamily before her. Then it seemed to occur to her that she had begun to tell her cousin of this happiness,

which had come into her life—of this great love, which had entered her heart and filled her whole being. She said in a low, firm tone,—

“Cousin Leon, the man who has won my love, and to whom I have plighted my troth is of my father’s religion—a Christian.”

Leon started from her side as if stung. What is this? Does he hear aright? To be sure his thoughts concerning this love of Leonora’s had never taken definite shape. He had not gone so far as to form a picture in his mind of the man of her choice; yet he would never have dreamed of this—so strictly Jewish had been her training—so carefully had she been guarded from all association with Christians. In truth, he knew that her grandfather had not even allowed her the society of young people among her own faith, lest she should form some early attachment, which might cause him trouble, if not wholly upset his own plans regarding her. It is often the case with a young girl, who has no brothers and sis-

ters, and especially where she has been denied even one girl friend on whom, girl fashion, she can lavish her affection. Thoughts like these crowded into Leon's mind as he paced up and down the broad path in front of Leonora, who sat in a listless attitude—her hands lying idly in her lap and her sweet face wearing a troubled expression. The young man glanced once at the lovely girl who had become so dear to him, and 'twas then that the Tempter whispered to him—she can be yours yet if you will only become a party to your uncle's plans. He will never consent to her marriage to a Christian—he will, no doubt, attempt to force her to marry you—take her, however unwilling, and once your wife you can travel in foreign lands; you can, by your devotion, cause her to forget this passing fancy, and she will learn to love you in time. These thoughts took flight as quickly as they came—they could not find lodgment in the noble mind of Leon Arnstein. He resumed

his seat beside the young girl, and said to her in low, gentle tones;—

“Tell me of this love of yours, little cousin.”

Leonora looked up at him in her own sweet way, and, reading in those kind eyes the sympathy for which she craved, she poured out the whole story of her love for Richard Leighton. As she went on and told what the past summer had brought to her, Leon studied the expressive face before him—the unspeakable happiness written there, and the tones thrilling with the intensity of feeling revealed to him how this gentle girl could love. He thought of her mother, whose story he knew only in part, owing to the reticence of his father’s people on the subject, yet he saw the similarity of Judith Arnstein’s love and early marriage with this love of Leonora’s, although in the case of her mother both parents were Jewish while Leonora claimed one parent of the Christian faith.

“It was Dr. Leighton’s desire,” continued Leonora, to go at once to my

grandfather and ask his consent to our marriage, but Lispeth begged us to defer it. She wished us to wait at least until next June, which would be one year from the time we first met; but Dr. Leighton would not agree to it. He is coming to New York this winter to enter upon his professional duties. He declares he will not live in the same city without visiting me. Indeed it would be very hard for us both. My grandfather must be told, and then, if he will not sanction our marriage, why we must wait until I am of age."

"In the mean time do you think Uncle Enos will permit Dr. Leighton's visits?" asked Leon in hesitating tones, which betrayed his doubts on the subject.

"I do not know, Cousin Leon, indeed I do not know, and it is that which troubles me at times. It seems so long to wait until I am twenty-one. Well, this suspense will not last much longer. In less than a month Richard will come to claim me. Lispeth finally succeeded in gaining his promise to defer his coming

for two months. One has already passed away."

"Ah!" thought Leon bitterly, "in Uncle Enos' desire to bring about a union between Leonora and myself, by keeping her all her life apart from the world, thinking thus to make her more susceptible to the wooing of her first lover, whom he has intended should be none other than myself—how little does he dream now that first love has already entered this tender, affectionate heart so prepared to receive it, in consequence of the dearth of human love most essential to one of her nature. Just as the flowers turn towards the sunshine, which causes them to blossom into rich beauty under its life-giving rays, so has her heart turned towards the rays of love, and there has blossomed in that heart a love beautiful to see, which will prove all enduring, everlasting. O, why could not I have been the first to try for this almost priceless treasure—this pure love. Had it not been for the breaking down of her health under the severe discipline of her grand-

father, she might have accompanied him to England, instead of going to the little cottage among the Highlands where she met the man to whom she is betrothed. Yet stay! is not here the decree of that destiny which presides over human life in which Leon has always asserted his belief? Or better still, is not this the evidence of the interposition of that Higher Power, which sometimes uses strange agencies to bring about what is best for man? The child of Judith Sturmer will marry a Christian—will in time embrace the faith of her husband, and thus the descendants of Karl Sturmer will be Christians.” So reasoned Leon as he sat beside his cousin on this quiet Sabbath morning. A day so peacefully begun but which was destined to prove to Leonora the stormiest of her life.

“Little Cousin,” said Leon, whose thoughts turned upon Mr. Arnstein and his plans, “do you know what I would do in your case? I would not defer another day telling your grandfather that you are betrothed, and desire his consent to your

marriage. Believe me, I understand Lispeth's motive in asking you to wait. She has thought—Leon hesitated—well no matter what she has thought—such love as yours never changes," he continued in an undertone, half to himself.

Leonora caught the words, however, and looked up quickly into his face; but she saw nothing there which could explain his meaning. Afterwards she understood, and her sympathetic heart bled at the thought of the bitter sorrow, which this noble young man must learn to bear.

"I will speak to Lispeth about it," said Leonora, "she has ever been a true and faithful friend. I have never known a mother's love, and she has tried to fill that lack in my life."

"Ah, yes, little one, do speak to her about it and tell her it is my advice. She will see that I am right."

"Come, let us go home now," said Leonora, rising. "See, the people are pouring out of church. It must be past the noon hour."

"Yes, it is, Cousin," replied Leon, looking at his watch. "We will go." And the two young people walked slowly and silently home.

XVII.

That evening as Mr. Arnstein was descending the stairs in response to the summons to supper, he glanced into the drawing-room, and what he saw in that glance caused him to stop a few moments on the lowest landing, which was directly opposite one of the two doors opening into the hall from the drawing-room. Reflected in a mirror he saw what filled his soul with delight. He believed he was gazing upon a love scene between Leon and Leonora. Had this been true it never occurred to him that he was playing a dishonorable part in looking upon what was not intended for his eyes. What he saw was to him but a scene in the last act of the great drama of his life, which would soon bring all things to a happy ending. He could not hear what Leon was saying to his cousin, but he saw both standing as if they had just risen from their chairs,

which, from their position, showed that they had been sitting close together. The young man was holding Leonora's hands in both his own, and was bending towards her in an attitude, which would be considered most lover-like. He was talking earnestly, and Leonora's lovely face was turned towards him. Her eyes were uplifted gazing into his with a sweet, pleading expression. The young girl spoke a few words and Mr. Arnstein saw Leon raise her hands to his lips. What might have followed he could not tell for footsteps above warned him that Lispeth was coming, so he hastened on to the dining-room. His passing through the hall reminded Leonora and Leon that they had risen to obey the summons to the evening meal. They soon joined Mr. Arnstein. Their manner puzzled him. He found himself studying them both with deep interest. Shrewd man of the world that he was, priding himself on his power of reading men, and fathoming the motives which underlie their actions, yet he could not read these two young peo-

ple, who had not learned the art of dissimulation. He did not understand them simply because he would persist in fancying he saw what was not there. He wished them to be lovers; hence believed they must be.

Leon talked less than was his wont, and when he did speak there was something missing in those usually hearty tones. He seemed to have suddenly left his boyhood behind him; his face wore a grave expression never seen upon it before. Leonora's manner towards him was gentle—almost tender. Those few moments in the drawing room had revealed to her how truly noble was the heart that beat beneath the gay, even careless exterior. The words she had spoken to her cousin, which Mr. Arnstein had been unable to hear, but which he believed to be the words of love, were, in truth, her expression of thanks for his brotherly sympathy and protestations of friendship, which Leon had assured her would endure through all time.

“Grandfather,” said Leonora, after

they had left the dining-room and Mr. Arnstein was preparing to go out, "there is something very important that I must speak with you about. It greatly concerns my happiness. Will you come into the drawing-room, please?" At the same time, the young girl linked her arm within that of her cousin and drew him into the room with her.

Mr. Arnstein was surprised at this request, for, although he felt sure, as he thought of the little scene he had witnessed scarcely an hour since, that he knew what his grandchild wished to say to him. He had looked forward almost daily to the gratification of his heart's desire as the result of bringing these two young people together; yet he was hardly prepared for this from his grandchild. It was from Leon's lips that he had expected to hear these words, and he wondered why he should stand so silently there by the window, looking out into the gloom of fading day. Still those words were none the less welcome, and he felt too re-

joined to hear them at all to care which of the two chose to speak them.

"I had thought to defer this yet a little longer, Grandfather," said Leonora, "but it seems best to tell you now. I have betrothed myself to one who loves me dearly, and whom I love in return better than my life. I ask your blessing and consent to our marriage."

Leonora's voice trembled as she spoke the first few words, but thoughts of Richard gave her courage, and, when she asked her grandfather's blessing, her tones were clear and firm, and her sweet brown eyes looked straight into his.

"I will tell you all," she added, "and then if you think me too young, why we are willing to wait, but"—

"I am glad to hear this of all things, dear child," interrupted Mr. Arnstein. "You are young to be sure; but early marriages are often the happiest." He spoke in extremely gracious tones, yet they expressed most inadequately the joy that filled his heart. His eyes shone with

a triumphant light as he turned to his nephew and said:—

“Come, my boy, and receive my blessing on you both. You know how I have looked forward to this moment.”

Leon left his position by the window, and advanced slowly towards Mr. Arnstein. The pained expression on his face showed the effort it cost him to speak—but speak he must in order to undeceive his uncle at once.

Leonora’s eyes were open wide with surprise at her grandfather’s words. She seemed about to speak, but Leon, with a slight motion of his hand enjoined silence.

“I cannot receive your blessing with my little cousin, but I can join with you in wishing her every joy, and may God grant her a long and happy life with the man who is so fortunate in having won her love.”

“Why, man, what is this I hear? You jest, and this is no time for jesting!” exclaimed Mr. Arnstein. “No, you are pale! What is the meaning of all this?”

The bewildered man seized his nephew by the arm, and fastened his piercing eyes upon his face as if he would read his very soul. "The truth, boy! the truth, I say!"

"I have spoken the truth. Leonora's love is given to another. She will marry the man of her choice."

Leon's words fairly stunned Mr. Arnstein at first. He turned to his grandchild in a dazed, helpless sort of way as if she might set things right; but no contradiction of what the young man had just said came from those lips. In the expression of Leonora's face he read the whole truth, and like a flash his manner changed. He advanced towards her. His eyes gleamed fiercely, and, when he spoke, his tones vibrated with passion which he made no effort to suppress:—

"Girl, what right had you to betroth yourself unknown to me? Think you that I will permit you to marry other than the one I have chosen for you? Never! There stands the man who is to be your husband."

Mr. Arnstein pointed to Leon, then seized the young girl by the arm, and before she was aware of what he was going to do, he had thrust her before her cousin. Leon grasped her hand and drew her to his side as if to protect her from this man's fearful anger, the like of which he had never seen.

"I will befriend my little cousin always, but I have told you, Uncle, that I will never take an unwilling bride. You cannot force this marriage upon me, at least; for I am my own master, sir!"

"Fool! Do you know what you are doing?" exclaimed Mr. Arnstein. "Do you know what this means to you—to me—yes, and to this foolish girl, who imagines that love, or say rather a passing fancy, can take the place of all she would gain by a marriage with you?"

"Let not a question of gain enter here, Uncle," returned Leon, "but listen rather to the story of Leonora's love; for then you cannot but see that all things are ordered for the best. Give her your bless-

ing and your consent to her marriage with Dr. Leighton."

"Dr. Leighton! Dr. Leighton! That has the sound of a Christian name! Girl, you dare not tell me that you have plighted your troth to a Christian!" yelled the enraged man.

"I dare to tell you so because I must, Grandfather," said Leonora. But her face paled, her form trembled with fear, and she clung to her cousin for protection, as she saw the effect of her words upon Mr. Arnstein. A demoniacal light leaped into his dark eyes. He raised his arm and would have struck her down in his blind rage had not Leon seized the arm in his own strong grasp and held him at bay.

"Hold, sir! Would you strike a defenseless girl?" exclaimed the young man, looking straight into the terrible eyes so close to his.

The baffled man saw the whole structure of his hopes and plans razed to the ground by the very ones whom he believed were to cement and strengthen it;

and all the fierceness of his nature found expression in his face. A few seconds the two men remained thus looking fixedly at each other. Leon stood with one arm around his cousin's waist, the other upraised in her defense. Then as if something in the young man's calm, steadfast gaze quelled the demon of rage, which held possession of the elder man, and looked out through his eyes, and as if that once strong will, weakened by the conflict within was brought into subjection by the same power, the arm relaxed and, when Leon released his hold, it fell to his side. A few seconds more and Mr. Arnstein again raised it, but this time to point towards the door and say to Leonora in tones strangely calm, while a deadly pallor overspread his features:—

“Go! ungrateful girl! You are nothing to me from this day forth! I will give you a home no longer!”

Leonora needed no second bidding. She flew into the outstretched arms of Lispeth, who appeared in the door-way just at that moment.

"She can leave your home for mine, sir!" cried the old woman. All the pent up hatred of years for this man whom she served, finding vent in the tones with which she addressed him.

"Your home!" exclaimed Mr. Arnstein.

"Yes, my home," returned the old woman. "Know you this, sir, that old Lispeth can provide for the child of Judith Sturmer, the second outcast from the home of one who has again been thwarted in his plans, because he cannot crush love from the heart for the sake of wealth and name."

"Begone, then! Begone at once! Your very presence is hateful to me! But stay—I will give you one day in which to leave my house forever with all your belongings, provided I do not see you during that time!"

"We do not want a day, sir! No, nor an hour even! We can go now!" retorted Lispeth. Then, turning quickly, she ascended the stairs followed by Leonora.

When they reached their room the young girl sank utterly exhausted into a large arm-chair. The strain upon her sensitive nerves had proved too great. She leaned back with closed eyes, and Lispeth feared at first that she had swooned; but the sweet brown eyes soon opened, and she drank some wine which Lispeth hastily poured out for her.

"Cheer up, little one," said the old woman in tender, soothing tones. "The worst is over now; and we will soon be gone from here forever."

"Where are we going, Lispeth, dear?"

"To Dr. Brewster's for to-night."

"And to-morrow?" asked Leonora eagerly, half guessing what Lispeth would say.

"Back to the little cottage in the Highlands, dearie. Back to your own love."

The words acted like magic on the young girl; the color returned to her pale cheeks, and her eyes shone with a happy light. It was not long before they were ready to depart, having donned their outdoor garments, and tossed a few articles

into a small satchel. As they were leaving the room where Leonora had passed so many years of her life, she gave one last look at the familiar objects about her, and then closed the door behind her without one pang of regret.

Leon met them in the hall, hat in hand, and announced his intention of accompanying them wherever they should go for the night. A few hurried words from Lispeth informed him of their plans, and then they all descended the stairs together.

Mr. Arnstein had been pacing up and down the long drawing-room during this interval. The strength of his passion seemed to have spent itself, but a fierce hatred filled his heart towards those who had thwarted him. The more he thought of his own position the more his malignity increased, and especially towards Lispeth whom he unjustly accused in his mind of having deliberately plotted against him, and in some way having brought about this state of things. He thought of the casket, which he believed

he had traced so successfully with the silken mitt as his clue that he had only one thread now to follow, and it would prove a sure guide to his long sought treasure. The question with him now was whether or not he should follow it up? Could he see a stranger, and above all a Christian profiting by all his years of dilligent searching? No, a thousand times no! Better let the secret of its hiding place remain a secret forever so far as he was concerned. Mr. Arnstein had arrived at this conclusion when he saw Lispeth descending the stairs followed by Leonora and Leon. The sight of them aggravated him. He instinctively felt that Lispeth was secretly exulting over him, and he could not resist intercepting her as they passed through the hall. Leonora stopped an instant, and would have spoken a few words of farewell to her grandfather, but a quick wave of his hand towards the door, and a sudden flash in his eye warned her that it would not be wise, so she followed Leon into the street.

"I shall abandon all search for the casket now," hissed Mr. Arnstein in Lispeth's ear, catching her by the arm at the same time.

"You should have done so long ago. I knew you would never find it," returned Lispeth, shaking herself free from his grasp.

"The girl will never have her inheritance!" exclaimed Mr. Arnstein in triumphant tones.

"She will have her inheritance, I say!" cried the old woman, and her voice fairly rung with joy and exultation as she threw a brown paper parcel at the feet of the astonished man; then, while he stooped to pick it up, she hurried through the street door and closed it behind her with a bang.

Mr. Arnstein hastily unwrapped the parcel, and there lay in his hand a *soft black silken mitt*. The peculiar and delicate design was only too familiar. He knew that it was the long sought for mate to the one already in his possession. He

started as if shot, passed his hand across his forehead, while a wild look came into his eyes; then he made a dash towards the front door, but ere he could reach it he fell prostrate on the floor.

XVIII.

Five years glided swiftly by, bringing many changes into the lives of those whom we have followed through the preceding chapters. We will look in upon them in their own homes once more before we say adieu. Far apart are those homes, for the broad Atlantic rolls between them; and far apart lie the paths which they are pursuing through life, yet they are near together in the highest and best sense. The bond of friendship between Leonora and Leon has strengthened as the years pass by. It is of such a kind that a diversity of thought and mode of life cannot affect it, for it is of the heart. The names of each are often on the lips of the different members of their separate households. A month never passes without bringing something which keeps the memory of each green in their hearts—a letter, or perhaps some simple gift.

A handsome house in a handsome street in London. A luxuriously furnished room on the second floor, which looks out upon a triangular enclosure within which are a few shrubs, a patch of grass, and a fountain. Sitting by one of those windows towards the close of a day in early autumn might be seen an old man, whom one would have difficulty in recognizing as Enos Arnstein, so changed was he. Paralyzed in his left side he was no longer able to use the arts with which in former years he had sought to conceal the marks of time. His hair was snowy white and fell in scanty locks upon his shoulders. Physically he was a wreck of his former self; but, saddest of all, the light of reason in those once keen, piercing eyes had fled, and in its place was a vacant, wandering look pitiful to see. On a low table in front of him was the same map over which he had spent so much time in years gone by. In his imbecility the ruling passion of his life seemed to assert itself at times. Then he would trace with the forefinger of his

right hand the red and blue lines, so carefully marked out during that period of his life when he believed he would some day get into his possession the plots of ground, which now comprise some of the wealthiest and handsomest portions of the City of New York. In a drawer of the table were several compartments filled with what this poor deranged mind believed to be bank-notes and coins, so nearly like the genuine had they been made to amuse the helpless man. He would count this sham money over and over again, and arrange it in piles before him with an accuracy of values, which would do credit to a most systematic mind. At those times so earnestly did he work that a feverish tinge would burn in his hollow cheeks, and his eyes would resume much of their old fire; then suddenly he would sweep all of his fancied wealth into the drawer in a confused mass and would sink back in his chair utterly exhausted, only to begin the same work over again when the spirit moved him. On this particular day he

had not touched his map nor counted his wealth; but had seemed weaker than usual. He lay back in the chair most of the time with eyes closed. Occasionally when he did open them they seemed more vacant—more expressionless than ever. Once in a while a strange unintelligible sound would break from his lips ending in low mutterings, which would continue some minutes. His attendant had watched him carefully all day, giving him nourishment oftener than usual, thinking thus to revive his fast failing strength.

From an adjoining room, separated only by an archway, came the soft, cooing sound of a young child as she sat on the floor on a thick rug with pillows at her back and toys all around her. About eight months' old was the little Leonora Arnstein, the pride and joy of the house. Save for Leon's handsome eyes, she strongly resembled the young mother sitting by a window occupied with a piece of delicate embroidery.

Soon the little one, catching sight of a figure, which appeared in the doorway,

stretched forth her arms and crowed with delight. The young wife sprang up to meet her husband, who embraced her lovingly; then turning to the little Leonora, who was still imploring him in her own baby way to take her, he caught her in his arms and tossed her high above him to the child's great delight.

"Baby Leonora, do you know that you have a new cousin far over the sea?"

"Ah, then the letter has arrived at last. I am so glad. Tell me about it, dear," said the young mother.

"You may read it yourself, little wife," replied Leon, drawing it from his pocket. It is from Dr. Leighton himself. His boy was three weeks old the day he wrote and—" Leon hesitated and looked towards the helpless figure in the adjoining room.

"Go on, dearest. There is something more to tell I am sure."

"And on that same day," continued Leon, "both mother and child received Christian baptism."

The words were scarcely spoken when a strange sound—almost a yell burst from the lips of the sick man; and, with what seemed superhuman strength he assumed an upright position, raised his arm and looked towards Leon, standing just beyond the archway, with a light shining in his eyes during those few moments as if reason had again returned to that darkened mind, and as if he had heard and understood the import of those words. Leon sprang towards his uncle, but, ere he reached his side, the shrunken form had fallen back, and the light had died out of his eyes. A slight pressure of the hand which Leon lifted and held within his own, a few feeble attempts to speak, then the cord which bound Enos Arnstein to life snapped. He was no more.

The evening of the same day which was Enos Arnstein's last on earth found Leonora and Richard sitting together in the library of their beautiful home on the Hudson. The curtains were drawn and

a bright fire burned upon the hearth, for the evening was cool. Very sad at heart were they by reason of a freshly made grave in a little cemetery about a mile away. A plain marble headstone—with only the words—“LISPETH, BORN 1775, DIED 1854,” cut in its pure whiteness told that it was the last resting place of her whose life had been one of untiring devotion first to the son then to the grandchild of Felix Sturmer’s second wife. The secret of the tie which bound together the exiled Polish Jewess and the proud English woman died with Lispeth. She could never bring herself to tell her own history for she knew that the sorrow, which had turned her hair gray at an early age, and had cast a shadow over her own life, was closely linked with that which had bowed the head of the haughty, yet noble minded, generous hearted English woman to the dust, causing her to seek a home in a foreign land, where, after a few years residence she became the wife of Felix Stur-

mer. Both innocent sufferers through the evil doing of one man whom each had trusted, and whom each had loved in a different way, they had cast their lots together—Lispeth, glad to serve in the capacity of a maid, or more properly speaking—companion, one to whom she owed a debt of gratitude, which she believed the service of a lifetime could not repay. Love for the woman who had befriended her in her hour of deepest trial, loyalty to her memory sealed Lispeth's lips, but she died happy knowing that Karl Sturmer's little one—the darling of her heart was a loving wife and happy mother.

On a table near Richard and Leonora was a handsome casket of rose wood, the one so diligently sought by Enos Arnstein, who little dreamed that for years it lay hidden in the cellar of his own house in New York, only to be moved when Lispeth bought the little cottage in the Highlands, where she passed the last years of her life. The key had been in Enos Arnstein's possession many years.

He found it when he successfully traced the casket to its first hiding place, from whence it had been taken by some one who had forestalled him, leaving the silken mitt, the mate to which he tried to find for six long years. So it was necessary to force open the lid, which, when raised, disclosed to view a tray lined with faded blue velvet containing several compartments in which were some rare and costly jewels. These jewels were all that was left of the wealth which once belonged to Felix Sturmer's English wife. In one of the compartments Leonora found an oval-shaped locket encircled with pearls, containing a portrait of a woman. She knew as she gazed upon the proud, beautiful features that it was her grandmother—the one who had once worn these jewels, and she wondered if the mother, too, would have cast from her the son who had loved and married a Jewess.

Beneath the tray was the money in gold which the eccentric old man had placed

there for the son he had disowned. Not a large fortune as fortunes are counted in New York at the present day, but a goodly sum, which forty years ago would have enabled Enos Arnstein to carry out his cherished plans.

The letters, too, which Lispeth had so carefully kept for years, were there beside the casket. The one from Carl Sturmer to his daughter, with directions to give it to her when the proper time should come, had been in Leonora's possession since her marriage day. It was full of tenderness and love for the little one whom he must leave to the care of "faithful Lispeth." He admonished Leonora to love and care for the good woman all her days, "for," wrote he, "she has done much for you and yours." He begged her to think tenderly of those who had cast him off when she should learn from Lispeth the story of his marriage. Then, with a prayer that she should love and revere the memory of her parents always, he closed the letter. Leonora had read this

letter many times, and on this night she had brought it out to read again, as she looked over the contents of the casket. The letter which Felix Sturmer wrote to his son was very brief. In fact, it seemed as if he had tried to tell Karl in as few words as possible the provision which he had made for him and where to find the casket. There was not one tender, forgiving word in the whole epistle. There was nothing in those lines which could possibly mislead the one to whom it was written into thinking that his father ever desired to see him again.

It was well that Karl Sturmer never saw his father's letter. It would have been a sad blow to his hopes for he had always looked forward to the day when he would be received among his own people again. He died before the letter reached its destination. He left Leonora to the care of "faithful Lispeth," giving her permission to open any letters which might come to him, and charging her to take his little one to his father's people if

they should ever express a desire to have her with them. Karl Sturmer's love for his old home and his own people was strong to the last.

Accompanying Felix Sturmer's letter to his son was one from Lispeth, carefully written in English, bearing the date June 16th, 1843. The day on which Enos Arnstein had told her what he had learned of the Sturmer family, and had tried to find out whether she knew the whereabouts of Marie Rabowski. The letter read as follows:—

“To Leonora Sturmer, the child of Karl Sturmer, and rightful owner of the casket, these lines are penned:—

“I have kept this letter with the one from your father as a proof of your right to the inheritance, which came too late for him to leave to you himself. I knew Felix Sturmer, your grandfather, and the other members of that family well enough never to attempt to ask of them any recognition of the child of Judith Arnstein, the Jewess. But I determined to go to

Felix Sturmer and ask him for the jewels to which he referred in his letter; also to ask him to put in a safe place, in trust for you, that share of his wealth which he had set aside for your father. I left you in good hands and started on my journey, reaching my destination just too late to see Felix Sturmer alive. He had died the night before. It did not take me long to decide what to do. I formed the plan of carrying away the casket just as he had commanded his son to do—"without making his presence known to any member of his family"—for, I reasoned, had the letter reached Karl Sturmer before his death, he would have been obliged to send for it, and whom could he have sent but me? Who knew better than I every nook and corner of his old home? So the day which saw the mourning family, the relatives, friends, and a retinue of servants, slowly moving towards the chapel where the services were to be held, and where the body of Felix Sturmer was to be placed in the tomb

of his ancestors, saw me, disguised as a peasant woman, making my way to a remote portion of the grounds where the casket lay hidden. The risk of detection was great notwithstanding the fact that most of the servants had followed their master to his last resting place, for there were several men left in charge of the premises.

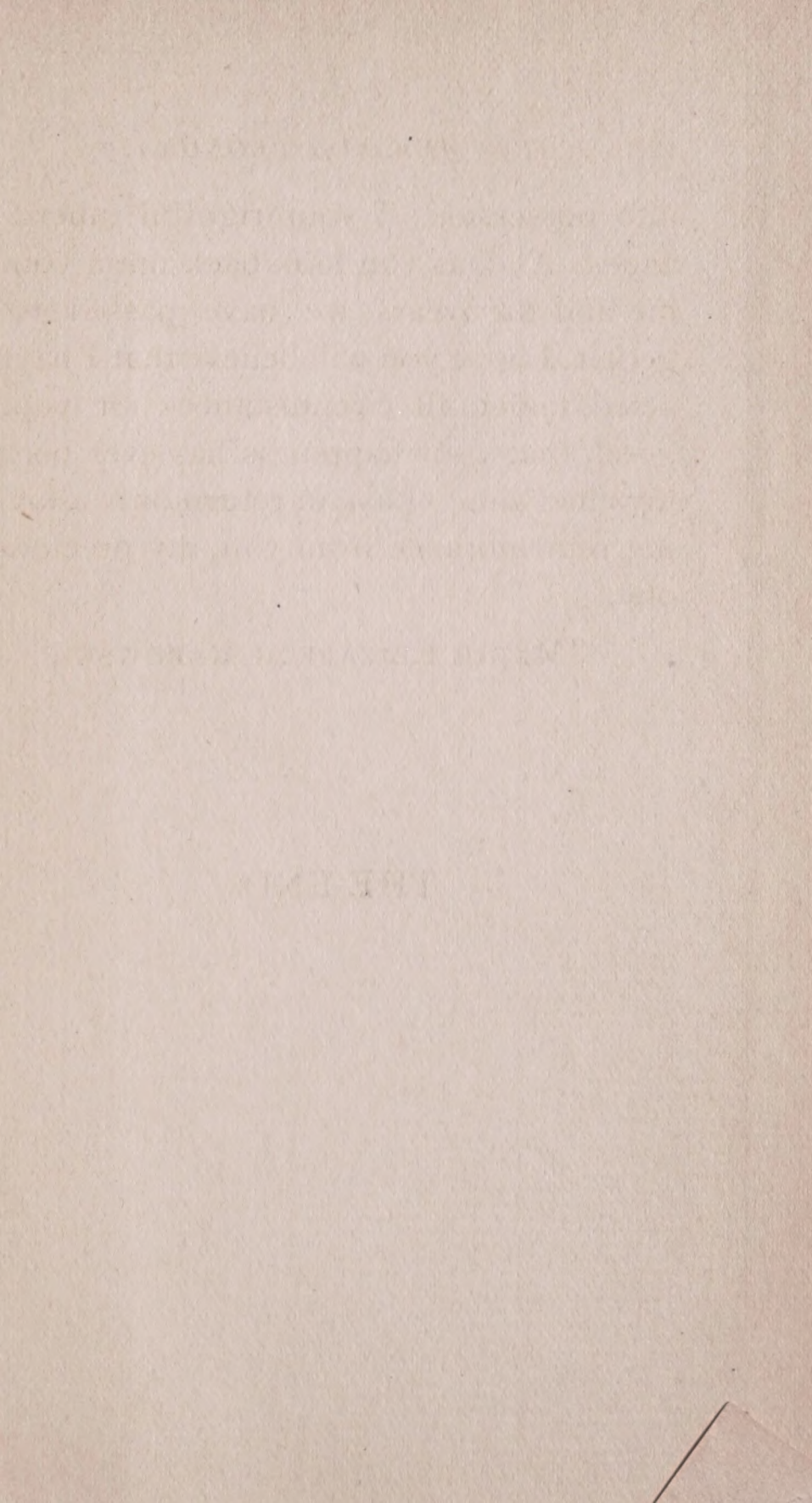
“Although Felix Sturmer selected a strange place to hide the casket, he also arranged it so that it could be easily removed. It was the work of but a few minutes to lift aside three loose planks in the floor of a small summer-house at the extreme end of a long narrow lake in the grounds, and to dig away a few inches of soft earth beneath. There lay an iron chest, the lid of which I lifted and saw a rose wood jewel-casket, which I recognized as belonging to my dear friend and great benefactress, Karl’s mother. I hastily lifted out the casket, replaced the lid of the chest, and spread the earth smoothly over it once more, then, slip-

ping the planks back into their places, I departed with the casket. Those who passed the peasant woman with her heavy basket of eggs, seemingly on her way to market, little dreamed how precious was her load. But it was not so easy a matter to bring the treasure to this country, and conceal it from the shrewd man who was determined to get possession of it. Ere I had found a man, commanding a vessel sailing between England and America, to whom I had once rendered a service, and who was willing to help me in return, and, ere I had reached port after a long and tedious journey, Enos Arnstein had learned of the death of both Felix Sturmer and his son; and had started out in search of his daughter to learn the truth concerning the casket. He found that his daughter, too, was dead, but he claimed you, her child, and is bringing you up as his own. When and under what circumstances you may read these lines I cannot tell, my darling. I only know that you will some day come

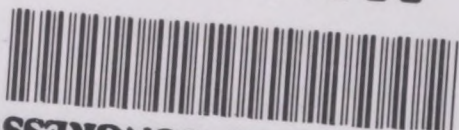
into possession of your rightful inheritance. And, as you look back upon your life and the years we have passed together, I hope you will believe that I have acted under all circumstances for your good, that your happiness has ever been my chief aim. I ask in return only a loving remembrance from you, my precious one.

“MARIE ELIZABETH RABOWSKI.”

THE END.



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